

Tuesday August 20 1996

Abu Dhabi D 8.50	Hong Kong HK 25	Qatar QR 1.00
Alaska L 2.50	Hungary F 2.00	Pakistan R 7.00
Andorra AT 10	India IN 15	Poland Z 2.50
Australia AU 30	Italy IT 5.00	Portugal P 2.00
Bahrain BH 10.00	Japan JP 10.00	Romania R 1.50
Belgium BF 10	Jordan JO 1.50	Saudi Arabia R 10
Bulgaria BG 10	Korea KR 10.00	Slovenia SI 2.00
Canada CA 12.50	Kuwait KW 0.50	Slovenia SI 2.00
Cyprus CY 1.00	Labrador LB 0.50	Spain P 2.50
Czechia CZ 1.00	Latvia LV 0.50	Sweden SK 1.00
Denmark DK 15	Lebanon LL 3.00	Switzerland SF 3.00
Egypt EG 5.00	Lithuania LT 0.50	Thailand TH 5.00
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The crime that shamed a nation

Horror in Belgium

G2 with European weather

Has the festival gone over the top?

Edinburgh's excesses

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Education

Exam boards in the firing line

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For his eyes only... Whose were the eyes behind Tony Blair's 'demon' stare in the Conservatives' controversial New Labour, New Danger advertisements? And why was he unhappy about his latest role? Find out on page 3



Legal precedent established in inquest on 20-year-old

Coroner links death from CJD to mad cow disease

Tim Radford and Alex Bellis

A CORONER created a legal precedent yesterday by linking beef contaminated with mad cow disease to the death of a 20-year-old from a new strain of Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease.

The North Durham coroner, Geoffrey Burt, said the death of Peter Hall, who died of CJD in February, was caused on the "balance of probabilities" by something like a beefburger infected with BSE.

It is thought to be the first time that the connection between CJD and BSE has been made in the courts, and it will put pressure on the Government for a public inquiry into mad cow disease and its equivalent in humans.

All previous inquests of CJD cases have had verdicts of death by natural causes. Mr Burt's decision to record a verdict of misadventure — because the death came about "through an outside course" — may open the door to relatives taking legal action against the Government.

The coroner said that there was no scientific proof for a link between BSE and CJD but in a court the burden of proof was less stringent. He said: "I am satisfied it is more likely than not that Peter contracted this disease prior to 1990 due to eating some form of contaminated beef product, probably a product such as a beefburger."

Peter's parents applauded the verdict, saying it furthered their campaign for a public inquiry. His mother Frances said: "I was surprised but very pleased that the coroner was so brave and open-minded. We will carry on fighting for the Government to recognise there has been a

problem for many years which should have been dealt with. Our son died because of their mistakes."

A Department of Health spokesman said last night: "Our position remains unaltered. There is no scientific proof that human beings can contract CJD from beef. Peter, of Chester-in-Street, was one of 10 cases of a new strain of CJD announced earlier this year. He became the "public face" of concern about the disease because his parents had filmed his decline, which was broadcast on television.

He was forced to abandon his degree course at Sunderland University due to deteriorating health. His case was also picked up because he had been a vegetarian since 1980, when he saw a television programme about cruelty to animals.

His father Derek said: "Before that he liked beefburgers as a quick snack when he came home from school at lunchtime. He liked brisket, too, and we would have that more often than not on a Sunday."

The discovery of the new form of CJD precipitated a new crisis for British farmers, and for the Government. For almost a decade from the discovery of BSE in a British dairy herd in 1986, ministers and health officials had insisted that there was no chance of infection of humans by "mad cow disease."

But the announcement on March 20 specifically confirmed a pattern of brain damage in human victims that was very close to BSE. More alarmingly, the new strain showed up in people younger than 40. Classical CJD is both rare, and hitherto has been found only in the elderly. Only one of the 10 original sufferers is now still alive.



Peter Hall in his student days and (below) in the final stages of illness shortly before he died from CJD early this year

Robert Perry, who conducted the post-mortem, said Peter had contracted an "unusual" form of CJD which in many ways resembled the condition known as Kurru found in the Fore tribe in south-east Asia. He explained that members of that tribe performed a ritualistic form of cannibalism in which human flesh was eaten and it was thought the disease was acquired as a result of this.

James Ironside, of the Medical Research Council's CJD surveillance unit, said in Edinburgh last night: "The hypothesis that this disorder is causally related to BSE has not been proven and nor will the proof — if it ever becomes available — be known to us in the near future."

'Scrap civil list in return for Crown Estates cash'

Survival plan for monarchy

Vivek Chaudhary

THE Queen could increase her income more than sixfold under proposals being discussed by the royal family to scrap the civil list in return for money generated from the Crown Estates.

The proposal is one of five under consideration, which would radically alter the constitutional position of the monarchy and attempt to restore its public popularity as it approaches the millennium.

Buckingham Palace confirmed yesterday that senior members of the royal family, including the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince of Wales and their advisers, are involved in discussions on the development of the monarchy.

According to some reports, the advisers, known as the Way Ahead Group, met twice a year and formed before recent promises by the Labour leader, Tony Blair, to review the monarchy's role if Labour wins power.

One of the most controversial proposals under discussion is the scrapping of the £8.7 million civil list in return for the restoration to the royals of the Crown Estates.

These include prime sites such as London's Regent Street and more than 300,000 acres of valuable land, which last year produced an income of £94.5 million.

Even if the Queen is taxed on the money at the upper rate of 40 per cent, she would receive more than £55 million, representing a considerable increase in her income and making her financially independent of the state.

- Royal revolution**
- Scrap the £8.7m-a-year Civil List payments in return for the restoration to the royals of the Crown Estates which produce an annual income of £94.5m.
 - Allowing women equal rights to succeed to the throne.
 - Streamlining the royal family to include only the monarch, the consort, their children and those grandchildren who are direct heirs to the throne.
 - Allowing heirs to the throne to marry Catholics.
 - Ending the monarchy's traditional role as head of the Church of England.

Buckingham Palace refused to comment yesterday on whether other expenses, such as maintaining the royal yacht and train, foreign trips and hosting state banquets, would be met from the Queen's own funds or continue to be met by the government if the proposals are accepted by Parliament.

It was being suggested last night that Treasury estimates of the cost of running the royal family came close to the £55 million figure.

Other plans include ending the law of primogeniture, which forbids first born females of the royal family from succeeding to the throne; streamlining the royal family to include only the monarch, the consort, their children and those grandchildren who are direct heirs to the throne; allowing heirs to the throne to marry Catholics; and ending the monarch's traditional role as head of the Church of England.

The Labour MP Tony Benn claimed yesterday that the proposals were designed to strengthen the position of the

royal family at a time of increased public criticism.

He said that the proposal to scrap the civil list in return for money from the Crown Estates would be met with opposition in Parliament.

Mr Benn added: "The strategy is to defuse criticism by giving the impression of modernising when actually what she (the Queen) is doing is consolidating. By sacking a few minor royals and discussing these other proposals, the Crown is being strengthened."

The Crown Estates were handed over to the government in 1980 and money generated from them has gone directly to the chancellor.

A Buckingham Palace spokeswoman refused yesterday to reveal further details of the proposals being discussed by the royal family.

She said: "It is a process of discussion of major issues, involving the government as necessary. When they meet, they discuss programme priorities and policy issues covering a wide range of areas."

"One of the reasons the monarchy has lasted for over 1,000 years is that it is able to adapt and change as necessary, whilst retaining the overwhelming public support it enjoys."

Constitutional expert Vernon Bogdanor said: "The sovereign would be more independent if she were being financed from her own revenue. There is a case for the financial independence of the monarchy — it would stop the squabbles about the civil list. The handing back of the Crown Estates raises a very important constitutional point."

David Starkey, a constitutional expert based at the London School of Economics, said: "These proposals would allow the royal family to have completely private lives — they are being privatised. The Queen is admitting that the whole idea of a family monarchy is dead."

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'Car she blows' as police aim to spear speeding Finns

The harpoon may solve a whale of a problem on the roads, writes Jon Henley in Helsinki

EXASPERATED by their inability to win high-speed car chases in a nation that has produced more than its fair share of world champion rally drivers, Finnish police have come up with a more forceful approach — ramming would-be runaways from behind with a four-foot steel harpoon.

"My initial impression is that this is revolutionary — a real breakthrough," said constable Markus Kuis-

ponen, said he was convinced his force's invention had a future. "There is a real need for a means of stopping a runaway vehicle forcibly but safely, without injuring bystanders," he said. "Why shouldn't harpooning a car work? It works with whales, and they're a lot bigger."

Unlike an ordinary harpoon, which is fired at the target, this version is bolted to the front of a specially reinforced patrol car. The harpoon is fitted with hydraulically operated steel bars that release automatically once it has punctured the quarry's boot, locking the two vehicles together.

The inventors, who say they will apply for patents if it attracts interest from other police forces, claim it leaves only a small, easily repaired hole a few inches in diameter.

"It is quite safe because it isn't long enough to hit anyone sitting in the back seat," said sergeant Markku Limingoja, one of the weapon's developers. "And if it does break off for some reason, we have fitted a radio transmitter in the shaft so we can track the escaping vehicle wherever it goes."

A useful additional refinement — although it is yet to be properly tested —

is a tear gas nozzle concealed in the harpoon's tip, Mr Limingoja said. "We're not quite sure if this bit will work yet," he explained. "but the basic idea is that if the runaway is armed or dangerous, we can temporarily incapacitate them before they do any more damage."

Senior police officials and traffic experts from the Finnish interior ministry, who are due to see the harpoon in action over the next few weeks, were not quite sure about the notion. "It sounds a bit like Mad Max," said a ministry spokesman. "But we'll certainly have a look."



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Sketch

Trust Mr Darcy to arouse interest



David Ward

PIPE down, Miss Austen. This is nothing to do with you. The intention here is to provide an informative salute to those self-effacing stewards who diligently watch over visitors to National Trust properties...

wonder why some of our visitors come," mused Mike Bird as he waited for the first of the day's crop. "They pay their money and wander straight through, seeing nothing."

Lawyers say sentences are getting longer as courts heed Home Secretary's call to get tough



GEORGE SANSOM: convicted of cocaine importation in 1995, jailed for 30 years. Accused of having organised the marketing of cocaine imported from Venezuela.

TOMAS HONZ: convicted of heroin importation at Southwark crown court and jailed for 26 years. Co-defendants Museum Street, jailed for 30 years, Ali Akso, who pleaded guilty, for 20 years, and Yusuf Kaymak for 24 years.

DEREK DOHERTY: from County Dublin, convicted of conspiracy to cause explosions as part of the IRA's mainland campaign. Was said to have planted 12 bombs in London in 1993. Jailed at the Old Bailey for 25 years.

SEAN McNULTY: construction worker, convicted in 1994 over the bombings of an Esso oil refinery in North Shields and a British Gas depot on Tyneside in 1993. Jailed for 25 years.

MURDERER: automatic life sentence but trial judge sets tariff. Average murderer on release has served a 15.4 year sentence. Lowest end of sentences for murder is six years, highest is life without parole, served by only small minority.

Cousin of footballer 'effectively sentenced to death for offence he did not commit after unfair trial' as steep rise in tariffs sets new records in prison terms

Judges 'rate drugs worse than murder'

Family stage demo for cocaine smuggler sentenced to 30 years

Duncan Campbell Crime Correspondent

DRUG smugglers will have to serve longer jail sentences than IRA bombers, murderers and rapists, according to lawyers for a man jailed for 30 years for cocaine smuggling who claims he is innocent.

The family of George Sansom, 42, a flower market trader from Dulwich, south London have organised a demonstration outside the Royal Courts of Justice in London today.

Financial brains behind a £125 million cocaine smuggling operation. It was alleged that they had organised a ship loaded with 795 kilos of cocaine to sail from Venezuela to London.

halted after a juror expressed his unhappiness at the 24-hour guard. After the trial, Mulkerin's lawyer, James Saunders, said the jail term was effectively a death sentence.

jailed at Southwark crown court for 30, 26, 24 and 20 years for importing 198.5 kilos of heroin, the second largest haul in Britain.

the drugs and legal advice organisation said. "We have noticed a general stiffening of sentences over the last two years."

Review

First flight on an allegorical course

Stuart Jeffries

STAR Trek did boldly go, even during its first voyage in a 1964 pilot. The show's creator, Gene Roddenberry, had sold the idea to NBC of a Wagon Train in deep space, filled with intergalactic gunfighters and cosmic fisticuffs.

beat him at three-dimensional chess. This became an absorbing sub-plot for many years: how could a human actor, Leonard Nimoy, convince us he was an emotionally-challenged pointy lug when he had the most expressive, question-begging eyebrows in the galaxy?

It may be hot, but it's not warming, says Tory think-tank

Paul Brown Environment Correspondent

TEMPERATURES topped 30C in many places in Britain yesterday, hotter than many Mediterranean resorts and enough to melt the tarmac on the M25.



As temperatures soared yesterday, children could not resist the dangerous leap from a groyne near the Palace Pier at Brighton. PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREW HASSON

Store boss's £3.5m pay package

Roger Cowe

ARCHIE NORMAN, the populist chief executive of the Asda supermarket chain, received pay and share options worth almost £3.5 million last year, according to the company's annual report published yesterday.

share options for all staff who are known as "colleagues". He joined Asda from the Woolworth, Comet and B&Q group, Kingfisher, after an MBA from Harvard and an initial career with top management consultants McKinsey.

the same price, but not for another two years. Other executive directors also cashed in similar options and received over a million new options at just 0.1p each.



Archie Norman: grabbed back Asda's market share

Japan's oldest geisha dies after 90 years of entertaining the rich

Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong

JAPAN'S oldest geisha, the last authentic link with an exquisitely demure tradition of song, dance and refined repartee now eclipsed by raunchy night clubs and hostess bars, has died in Tokyo, aged 102.

ter, Hideki Tojo, to the Honda company's founder, Soichiro Honda. But in recent years, few Japanese men have had the money and classical training needed to enjoy the highly-styled and hugely expensive pastime known as geisha-asoba - "playing with geisha".

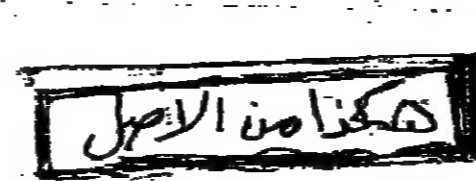
Beggars angry as Melbourne's Big Issue increases circulation

Christopher Zinn in Melbourne

THE Australian version of the Big Issue has been on the streets of Melbourne for a only few weeks but travellers who have sold the London magazine have already offered their services as vendors.

not just needing some extra money," said the distribution manager Suzanne Bodnar. The city's few beggars are allegedly angry their receipts have fallen as the circulation of the Big Issue has gone up.

'Somebody once asked me whether my first sexual experience was heterosexual or homosexual. I replied that I was too polite to ask'





The missing children, Tom and Jodi Loughlin. 'Obviously, we cannot exclude the possibility that they could have been washed out to sea,' said police as the search continued yesterday

Hopes fade for lost children

Air, land and sea search fails to find any trace of girl, aged 6, and her four-year-old brother

James Melke

HOPES were fading last night for two children who were last seen on an East Anglian beach on Sunday afternoon. Police and coastguards fear Jodi Loughlin, aged six, and her brother Tom, four, may have been swept out to sea. The children vanished at the start of a holiday at Holme, near Hunstanton, Norfolk. No trace has been found despite an intensive search.

Police said a holidaymaker saw two children playing alone in the surf at Old Hunstanton — about a mile from where Jodi and Tom were last seen — at around 6.30pm on Sunday. She told police she glanced at the children 15 minutes after first seeing them and could then see no sign of the boy. Her description of the children fitted that of Jodi and Tom, who were wearing swimsuits, who could not swim. About 100 members of the rescue services used two helicopters, thermal imaging

equipment, boats and tracker dogs as they searched the sea, dunes, cliffs, salt marshes, beaches and a local golf course along a four-mile stretch of coast including the nearby villages of Hunstanton and Thornham. Superintendent John Hale of Norfolk police said: "Sadly, there is absolutely no indication of the presence of the children. Nothing at all. Obviously, we cannot exclude the possibility that they could have been washed out to sea." Jodi and Tom were last seen by their parents, computer consultant Kevin Loughlin and Lynette Thornton, running towards the sea at about 5.30 on Sunday afternoon, the first beach visit of a week's holiday from their home in south London.

After two hours fruitless searching, the couple alerted rescue service who, with the help of coastguards and volunteers, scoured the area until the early hours of yesterday morning. The search was resumed at 5am, aided by a dog team from the Derbyshire mountain rescue service and lasted until dusk. Mr Hale said Mr Loughlin and Ms Thornton "have been extremely brave and controlled and their courage is tremendous". He added: "The last sighting by the father was very, very shortly after they arrived. The children were very quickly changed and straight down to the water's edge." Police earlier said there was nothing to suggest that the youngsters had been ab-

ducted. The children were not carrying buckets and spades and were not likely to have been digging in the sand, a potential hazard in dunes in that area. Locals say the tide is not especially fast, but the uneven beach can catch out the unwary paddler. Coastguards, who are running an "On the beach, keep your kids in reach" campaign, said nine children became separated from their parents on the beach at Hunstanton on Sunday and two more were briefly missing at nearby Brancaster today. Coastguard sector officer Colin Tomlinson said: "Parents should never let children out of their sight or out of their reach on a beach because the sea is always dangerous."

In a separate accident, the body of an eight-year-old boy was found on the beach at Trustrorpe, Lincolnshire, early yesterday. He had been reported missing from the local Sutton Springs Holiday Camp. Police said there were no suspicious circumstances. The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents responded to the death and to the missing children by issuing advice on beach safety. It said children should be supervised at all times; the location should be checked with the local tourist office about potential hazards; and beaches patrolled by life guards should be chosen; inflatable airbeds or toys should not be taken on to the sea; and parents should stop children tunnelling into sand dunes.

Belgium to act on sex offenders

Stephen Bates in Brussels

THE Belgian government bowed to public pressure yesterday and announced tougher punishment for paedophiles in the wake of increasingly grim revelations about Marc Dutroux, a builder aged 39, who has admitted abducting teenage girls. The justice minister, Stefan de Clerck, pledged to make it harder for paedophiles to be released from jail early and to investigate possible links with an international conspiracy. "We are looking for paedophile networks all over the world," he said. "We have found a problem in Belgium but we are looking for connections."

His statement came as hundreds of people queued outside a funeral parlour near Liege to pay their last respects to Julie Lejeune and Melissa Russo, both aged eight, whose bodies were dug up at one of Mr Dutroux's homes at the weekend. A wave of public anger and emotion is running through the country at allegations of police incompetence, and political indifference in the highest levels of government about long-standing fears that a gang of paedophile abductors may be at large.

Discovery of the bodies of the two eight-year-olds brought to seven the number of dead girls found at different locations after a series of disappearances dating from 1989. Police last week rescued two teenage girls imprisoned in a secret room at Mr Dutroux's home, but six children are still missing. Mr Dutroux and his lodger, Michel Lelievre, have already been charged with abduction. Mr Dutroux's wife, Michele Martin, a former teacher and mother of his two small children, was yesterday also formally charged with being an accomplice to the girls' kidnapping. A fourth detainee, Jean-Michel Nihoul, a Brussels estate agent, is expected to be charged today.

Mr De Clerck said it would be more difficult for sex offenders to win parole in future, and that supervision after they left prison would be tightened up. "Our country is in a state of shock," he said. A prison commission would examine the cases of all sex offenders before they were released, and there would be more secure units for offenders. "Magistrates will also have to be integrated into the system of releasing people." Referring to Mr Dutroux's case, Mr de Clerck said it was not the decision to release him early which had been at fault, but the administrative procedures that led to it. "Everything was formally respected. The problem was the difference between administrative procedures and reality." Because of professional secrecy rules, "there was no psychiatric report as such" on Mr Dutroux available for those assessing whether he was safe to be released into society, he said. "That's a problem we'll have to look at."

Last Thursday Mr Dutroux led police to a hidden room in the cellar of his home near Charleroi, in southern Belgium, where they found Leetitia Delhese, aged 14, and Sabine Dardeenne, aged 12. Both girls were alive but had been drugged and sexually assaulted. Much worse was his admission that Melissa and Julie, who were abducted in June last year, were allowed to starve to death while he was in prison for four months last winter. There was a national outcry when it was revealed that Mr Dutroux was a convicted child sex offender who had been released 10 years early in 1982 from a 15-year prison sentence, despite the opposition of the public prosecutor. Mr de Clerck's predecessor, Melchior Wathelet, who is currently on holiday in Italy, has taken the brunt of public criticism for his decision to free Mr Dutroux early, and for relaxing the release regulations for sex offenders. The police have also been strongly criticised after admitting that they searched Mr Dutroux's house at least twice last year without finding the girls. They also failed to find the kidnapped teenagers when they searched the house early last week. Yesterday they stepped up their hunt for two further teenage girls, Ann Marchal, aged 19, and Eefje Lambreks, aged 17. Mr Dutroux has admitted abducting them near Ostend a year ago. He told police he thinks the girls are still alive but are no longer in the country.

Cabinet panel split over ID card

Major may be forced to back Howard and use symbol of Union on proof of identity

Michael White Political Editor

ACABINET committee yesterday failed to resolve the "flags and symbols" dispute over the proposed national identity card, leaving John Major with little choice but to back Michael Howard's insistence that the Union flag should be incorporated in the new design. With Northern Ireland min-

isters reluctant to inflame nationalist sensibilities by conceding to the Home Secretary's pressure, the Prime Minister is caught between a rock and a hard place in which the only available compromise would be to let ID cards in Northern Ireland be different from those in Britain. That could annoy rightwing Tory MPs and activists almost as much as the concession whereby the European Union's 12 star flag is certain

to feature on the card since it is likely to double as a Euro-harmonised driving licence. The Department of Transport, also present at yesterday's abortive committee meeting, already plans to start issuing plastic, credit card size licences from next year for use throughout the EU. Ministers are keen to charge voters up to £15 for an ID card, hardly an incentive according to wary MPs on both sides. In reality they were planning to charge drivers for the new driving licence anyway and an ID card could be incorporated. It is now free to anyone who

has paid £21 for a provisional licence, but £5 to replace lost licences. Added to this, national sensibilities have been stirred with Sir Patrick Mayhew's Stormont deputy, Michael Ancram, again warning yesterday's committee that an ID/driver licence bearing the symbolic Union flag would cause problems. Some Tory MPs feel the same about the EU's 12 stars but, after protracted negotiations, the current Transport Secretary, Sir George Young, agreed that it would be in the top left corner with the letters UK — or EU equivalent — printed inside the logo.

'Demon' eyes belong to Blair fan

James Melke

IF NOTHING else, the eyes have it. Scott Woods, sometime waiter, former hotel manager and often out-of-work actor yesterday revealed his starring, indeed starring, role as the demonic Tony Blair. The 42-year-old Labour supporter knew he was working for a Conservative Party advertising campaign when he accepted a fee of about £200. But he thought his eyes were to be used glaring from behind a curtain rather than in the New Labour, New Danger "demon Blair" poster which has been roundly condemned. "It was only when I saw the eyes transposed on Tony Blair that I was surprised and felt some anger," said the actor. "I admire the man. I look forward to hav-

ing him as Prime Minister." The personal attack went too far, said Mr Woods, whose screen performances include playing a pirate in Ken Russell's Treasure Island last year and as a security guard in The Fifth Element, a science fiction film by Luc Besson. "I am a Labour voter but an out-of-work actor as well. Work is work. I did not think it was going to be used in this way and I did not expect this controversy." Mr Woods, who lives in Hackney, east London, said political campaigning should be about principles not personalities. The poster job, which lasted about two hours, was his first gained through the Ugly Showbiz Agency. He said he was not told, even by the production company which also filmed him on video, that his eyes might be substituted for Mr Blair's.



Tony Blair and Scott Woods: 'My eyes are evil, not Blair's' He wore blue contact lenses over his already blue eyes and was told these would be touched up into red later by computer. "It is my eyes that are evil and demonic, not Tony Blair's. It is a role I play." That role, part of a campaign directed by M & C Saatchi and authorised by the Tory chairman, Brian Mawhinney, looks short-lived. Their appearance has split Tory opinion and the Advertising Standards Authority is investigating. "It is not an easy life," said Mr Woods. "If I have to wait tables again, I will wait tables." But he does have some work lined up in a film called The Lighthouse — playing a serial killer.

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"I was at a Quaker boarding school which fosters a degree of serious thought about the world, because Quakers think seriously about things, and every year since then I think I've become more and more frivolous."

Breakfast News anchorman Justin Webb

G2 page 7



If Queen Victoria had been succeeded by her first child, her daughter Victoria (right), the present queen would be a woman who calls herself a 'poor little hausfrau from Hamburg'. Further back, a change in the rule of succession would have put Margaret Tudor (left) on the throne of England in place of Henry VIII



PICTURES: MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY

Jewel in crown of Queen's finances

Crown Estate could give royals independence

Ruaridh Nicoll looks at source of wealth

FROM the high street of Tomintoul — Britain's highest village — the Glenlivet estate spreads purple into the hills. About 37,000 acres of the Highlands, it is set in the Cairngorms — the most precious part of Britain. From these hills pours Glenlivet water, bringing with it a flow of cash in royalties and rents which pools in the coffers of the Treasury. Glenlivet estate — strangely belongs to no one, its ownership a convoluted mix between the monarch and the commoners. For now the profits are for the benefit of the taxpayer but the monarchy seems to want them for its own. But Glenlivet produces just a trickle of cash compared to the estate of which it is part, the enormous Crown Estate. That owns Regent Street in central London stretching from Piccadilly to Oxford Street, farmland and forestry from Dunster to East Anglia, some of the highest moorland in Scotland, 33 per cent of the coast between the high and low water marks and even the seabed. Last year it ploughed £24.5 million into the Treasury and that was pure profit. The news that the royal family is prepared to give up the £2.8 million Civil List for the Crown Estate was swallowed up by other proposals by a so-called Way Ahead

Paying the Queen

How it is now	How it might be
<p>The Civil List £2.8m is paid annually to eight royals from public funds. The Queen repays £1.2m of this that is earmarked for lesser royals.</p>	<p>The Crown Estates Includes some 300,000 acres of agricultural land, extensive urban properties, the sea bed around the British Isles and 50% of the coastline. Last year this provided an income of £24.6m. This currently goes to the Treasury. It is suggested that the Civil List is scrapped and the Queen keep the surplus from the Crown Estates. The future of the Duchy of Lancaster is unknown.</p>
<p>The Duchy of Lancaster The Privy Purse, which provides for the Queen's private and public expenses, raised £3.9m in 1994 from some 50,000 acres of estates known as the Duchy of Lancaster.</p>	



Group made up of the senior royals. Politically sensitive issues such as the ability of the monarch to marry a Catholic and scrapping the role as head of the Church of England grabbed the headlines. But money is the key — and the Crown Estate is the pot of gold that would allow the family to escape the public's "we pay for you" cry. Yesterday the financiers at the estate's office in London were not quite sure of the what was happening to the estate's ownership. They say the estate is "not the property of the Government, nor the sovereign's private estate. It is part of the hereditary possessions of the sovereign in right of the crown." Asked what that meant one staff member said: "Well, it's a bit like the crown jewels, but not quite." The estate, which was started by Edward the Confessor when he came to power in 1042, is an example of the convoluted history of the monarchy and Parliament. It provided an income to the kings and queens of England until 1760 when King George III passed the annual profits to Parliament in exchange for the Civil List and the estate found itself caught somewhere between the two constitutional bodies. In 1861 the position was clarified by an Act of Parliament. It is governed by up to

Change would have little effect on who is in line

Martin Linton on 'curse of elder sisters'

IT WOULD be easy for the Windsors to end the law of male succession since they have escaped from that traditional curse of royal families — elder sisters. The Queen has an eldest son. So does the Prince of Wales. In fact, there is not a single case of an elder sister with a younger brother in the entire clan of the Mountbatten Windsors. Even in the more far-flung branches of the family, the Gloucesters and the Kents, the same pattern appears to repeat itself: two

sons would not have been there in the first place if the succession had always been by primogeniture alone. The present Queen would have been a distant cousin at best. If Queen Victoria had been succeeded by her first child, her daughter, Victoria, the present Queen would be in the position of a woman who describes herself as "a poor little hausfrau from Hamburg". Princess Felicitas Cecilie Alexandrine Helene Dorothea von Nostitz-Wallwitz, aged 62, a retired economist, is the successor of Queen Victoria by strict law of primogeniture. She comes from a line that has produced more daughters than sons. Her father, grandson of the last Kaiser, had two daughters. She has three daughters and a son and her eldest daughter, Friederika, also has three daughters. But she would only have been Queen now if male succession had ended in the reign of Queen Victoria. There were many other kings who took the throne from elder sisters. George III had an older sister, Augusta, who married the Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel. Charles I was another imposter. He had an elder sister, Elizabeth, who married the King of Bohemia. Henry VIII had an elder sister, Margaret, who married James IV of Scotland and in the end it was Margaret's descendant, James VI, who succeeded Elizabeth as James I of England. In the medieval period, Henry IV had an elder sister, Philippa, who married the King of Portugal, and the ill-fated Edward II was dominated by two elder sisters and a murderous wife. The original establishment of the line of succession was when Henry I's only daughter, Matilda, tried to claim the throne after his death. Although she failed, she established her claim in what is often seen as a blow for female succession. But her rival Stephen could claim as much. He was the son of Henry's elder sister Adela. He was defending the right of female succession.

Catholic Church welcomes succession review as end to 'peculiar anachronism'

Martin Linton
THE CATHOLIC Church yesterday welcomed the royal family's review of the bar on Catholic succession. "It's a peculiar anachronism, a bar only on Catholics and not on any other religion such as Muslims or Jews," said the church's spokesman in England, Monsignor Kieran Coury. "There's no official discrimination against Catholics any more, and clearly the Queen has no difficulty with us, so it is a peculiarity to have it still written into the constitution." The Act of Succession of 1701 lays down that the monarch cannot be a Roman Catholic, and neither the monarch nor the heir to the throne can marry a Catholic. There are two further restrictions: members of the royal family must ask the Queen's permission if they wish to marry a Catholic, and the Lord Chancellor would have to give up certain eccle-

siastical responsibilities if he were a Catholic. Lord St John of Fawsley, an authority on the monarchy, said the bar was "an infringement of the human rights of members of the royal family and somewhat insulting to the Catholic community". But he warned: "I do not think it would be desirable for the Queen to end her role as head of the Church of England. She is supreme governor and that is right and proper. Abandoning that role would mean disestablishment and it would seem like a public repudiation of religion." The late Antonia Fraser, a Catholic and an historian, pointed out that Britain had had queens who were Catholics through most of the 17th century without it affecting their husband's position, as head of the Church of England or preventing their heirs being brought up as Protestants. Lord Blake, a constitutional expert, said there was no need for change. He told Radio 4's Today programme: "It is perfectly reasonable to air these things, but it doesn't necessarily mean one should adopt all the proposals floating about." Stephen Twigg, general secretary of the Fabian Society, which last week published a call for reform of the monarchy, said: "In a multi-racial secular society where there are people of many religions and none, is it really appropriate that the head of state should also be head of one of the churches?"

Gay dismissal claim adjourned

CLAIM by 18 ex-military personnel that the Ministry of Defence unfairly dismissed them for being gay was adjourned by an industrial tribunal yesterday. Chairman John Warren ruled that the tribunal should wait until the divisional court reaches a decision on the case of Terence Perkins, a leading medical assistant in the Royal Navy sacked because of his sexual orientation. But Mr Warren, recognising the ruling may not be reached until the new year, spoke of the need "to try and move these things along". The ministry's regulations against homosexuals in the services were still in force

"and one is very aware that people are still being subjected to them", he told the south London tribunal. Yesterday's applicants — who include two ex-RAF pilots and a former officer in submarines — were seeking to have the tribunal refer their cases to the European Court of Justice, arguing that the ban is contrary to the European Union's equal treatment directive. Their arguments hinge on a recent ruling by the court in the case of P v S, which gave transsexuals protection from discrimination under the directive. P, a male to female transsexual, was sacked from an educational establishment in Cornwall county council

after deciding to have a sex change operation. The European court said this amounted to unlawful discrimination. A harrist representing the 18, Stephanie Harrison, said: "The European court has taken a broad approach to the directive and one that recognises a fundamental human right to be free from discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation." She said the case of Perkins "will decide the issue of the scope of the equal treatment directive and whether it covers sexual orientation as discrimination." The scope of the directive cannot be confined to discrimination simply on the

grounds of one or other sex." Rabinder Singh, counsel for the ministry, argued that the case of P versus S was not applicable to unlawful discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. He said: "We do not at this stage at least make to strike out these applications." But he successfully applied for the case to be adjourned until the Perkins ruling. Duncan Lustig-Prean, a former Royal Navy lieutenant commander and chairman of Rank Outsiders — the organisation advising homosexual service personnel — said the adjournment was expected, but added: "The closing remarks of the chairman were sympathetic to the plight people are in."

Union warns of asbestos risk in schools

THE National Union of Teachers warned yesterday that asbestos posed a risk to pupils and staff at many schools in England and Wales, writes John Carol. Doug McAvoey, the general secretary, said he was serving a writ on Greenwich education authority in London, claiming negligence over the asbestos-related death of a 37-year-old teacher. The Government had refused to make local authorities check schools for asbestos. "Asbestos is a killer. The Government knows this, yet it fails to take even the simplest action."

'No risk' blood recalled

Chris Millill
Medical Correspondent
BLOOD products used to treat haemophiliacs and burns victims were recalled yesterday after hepatitis was found in plasma from which they are made. The National Blood Authority said the move was precautionary and the four batches of Factor Eight and albumin posed no risk to patients as they would have gone through viral inactivation processes to make them safe even if they contained a virus. The problem was revealed by a new ultra-sensitive test, known as PCR, required under European Union rules

for the manufacture of certain blood products. This identified minute traces of hepatitis C in the plasma pool from which the products were being made by Bio Products Laboratory, part of the NBA. The test was on a sample of the plasma that was to be used to make immunoglobulin — an immune system booster used to fight hepatitis commonly given to travellers and holidaymakers. Other parts of the plasma pool had already been used to manufacture Factor Eight, which is given to haemophiliacs, and albumin, used to treat people with burns and shock. The batches contained about 2,000 bottles of Factor Eight and 11,500 of albumin.

An NBA spokeswoman said: "We consulted the Department of Health and felt in the public interest this was the right thing to do. If we find any trace of a virus then we don't use the product." She stressed that patient safety had not been put at risk as manufacturing processes, such as heat treatment and double pasteurisation, would have killed the virus. "Some patients will have received the Factor Eight and albumin but there is no question of these being unsafe, because the manufacturing process involves viral inactivation. Even if they contained the virus, this would have been killed. Patients have not been put at risk."

مكتبة القرآن

News in brief

Rhino horn seized in raid

TWO kilos of rhino horn valued at £15,000 was seized at commercial premises in west London yesterday as part of Operation Charm which is aimed at the illegal importation of endangered species. In recent raids parts of tigers, bears, monkeys and antelopes have been seized. The trunk is highly prized in the Far East as an aphrodisiac.

Open-air drink warnings

A HANDFUL of alleged open-air drinkers in Glasgow yesterday fell foul of the first blanket ban in Britain on drinking in public places. Strathclyde police said that after the first day a handful of reports have been sent to the Procurator Fiscal and several warnings given. The bylaws are primarily to enable the police to act against anyone creating a disturbance.

Holiday medical 'frauds'

FRAUDULENT insurance claims from holidaymakers have included one from a man said to have "lost" 17 appendicitis operations and another from a woman who claimed to have lost her left eye no fewer than five times in 18 months, the Association of British Insurers said yesterday.

Duke's Greenwich fears

DEFENCE Secretary Michael Portillo was under renewed pressure over the future of the historic Royal Naval College site at Greenwich yesterday after the Duke of Edinburgh wrote about his concerns over the "chaotic" situation at Greenwich. He is perturbed about the delay in finalising details for the move of Greenwich university and the National Maritime Museum, of which he is a trustee, into the college.

Pet plans for cemetery

COUNCIL planners have backed plans for a pet-and-people cemetery to be built in Hunsbury, North Devon despite some protests from residents. The owner Julian Wedgwood said there were 1,000 plots in the cemetery each of which would be beside a tree on which there would be a plaque instead of the customary headstone.

Doctors claim disconnections threaten public health • Government insists disease link is unproven

BMA attacks water cut-offs

Chris Millill Medical Correspondent

CALL from doctors to make the disconnection of water supplies illegal because of the risk to public health was yesterday rejected by the Government which said there was insufficient evidence to prove a link. Cutting off water to homes could lead to the spread of diseases such as dysentery and hepatitis A, the British Medical Association warned.

"We have never been able to establish any direct relationship between water disconnection and the spread of communicable diseases in the UK." A spokeswoman for Thames Water, which made 1,087 disconnections in 1985/86, more than any other company, said cutting off supplies remained a last resort, but added: "We have to distinguish between those people who can't pay and those who won't pay."

should not be adopted in England, where disconnections have been allowed since 1945. According to the latest report from the water watchdog, Ofwat, supplies to 5,862 homes in England and Wales were cut off last year because of unpaid bills. This was the lowest level since 1988/89. The annual number of disconnections has fallen sharply since it peaked at 21,282 in 1991/92. Two companies, South East and West, made no disconnections at all last year.

Disconnections made basic hygiene impossible. "We are particularly concerned about vulnerable families, people with young children, the elderly and chronically sick," she said. "It becomes impossible to look after people in these circumstances without water, even for short periods." The BMA was also concerned about water metering, which could lead to families depriving themselves of adequate supplies. "Water companies are entitled to recover debts, but the supply of water shouldn't be allied to that. Water is too vital a resource to be treated in that way."

The doctors were backed by the National Consumers' Council, which is campaigning to have disconnections banned. Acting director Robin Simpson said: "Many consumers face real difficulties paying for water, and disconnection is a harsh, dangerous and unnecessary sanction."

Janet Langdon, of the Water Services Association, said companies should be allowed the sanction of disconnections. "Disconnections were at their lowest level since before privatisation and water companies ensured they did not cut anyone off who genuinely could not pay," she said. "We want to have the right to disconnect for those customers who don't pay their bills, for empty properties, but we want to make absolutely certain all customers who require water and pay for their water, get their water."



Net-surfers united... Adrian Philpott and Cindy Irish kiss for the cameras after their wedding in Aberdeen university's medieval chapel yesterday

Marriage made by God and the Net

Erlend Clouston on how a transatlantic computer courtship ended in a ceremony to gladden the hearts of techno-nerds

AN ACER Pentium married a Packard Bell Pentium yesterday in a ceremony that will have gladdened the hearts of techno-nerds everywhere. Three months after their first transatlantic date on the Internet and a mere three days after their first fleshly encounter, Adrian Philpott and Cindy Irish promised each other life-long back-up in the slower-paced surroundings of Aberdeen university's medieval chapel. Cindy, a 46-year-old widow from Connecticut in the United States, arrived just

four minutes late for the official climax to a courtship which began on May 20 when she interrupted 42-year-old Adrian's on-screen discussion of the film Braveheart. Electronic empathy was cemented by shared Christian convictions. Adrian's successful proposal popped over Cindy's modem four weeks later. Allusions to the relationship's unorthodox background were studiously avoided during the 30-minute service which Adrian, a divorced computer sales adviser, threw open to a media pack anxious to witness the possible first stages of a social revolution. Apart from the theoretical prospect of a boom in Internet-induced babies, the Philpott-Irish union was proof to isolated urbanites that Net-surfing can yield more than glazed eyes and an unhealthy pallor. "We didn't start out looking for a partner, but it just happened that way," said Adrian, a mustachioed RAF electrician with ear-lobe length hair. "On reflection, though, it's not a bad way to meet."

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'Folksy' Rabbi Gryn dies at 66

RABBI Hugo Gryn, whose role as a folksy Jewish philosopher on BBC Radio 4 belied his insight and eloquence, has died aged 66, it was announced yesterday. He had suffered for some time from cancer of the brain. But earlier this month he insisted on travelling from his hospital bed with his wife Jacqueline to record one final radio programme for the confrontational The Moral Maze. No mention was made of his illness because "he did not want to be an object of pity", said a friend. Two weeks ago he performed part of a wedding service for a friend at the West London Synagogue, where he had been president for 22 years. Although his breath rasped and he had to be supported, his speech — a guest said — made the occasion. Rabbi Tony Bayfield, chief executive of the Reform Synagogue of Great Britain, of which Rabbi Gryn was president, said: "The void he leaves will be impossible to fill."

The Rev Ernest Res, BBC head of religious broadcasting said: "He had the talent of being able to speak in all manner and conditions of people." Rabbi Gryn, a Carpathian child survivor of Auschwitz, lost much of his family, including both parents, in the German extermination programme for Jews. Liberated from a slave labour camp in 1945, he worked on a farm in Scotland on a child rehabilitation programme. He won a science scholarship to Cambridge university, fought in the Israeli war of independence and trained as a rabbi in the US, returning to Britain in the 1950s. The basis of his appeal was a homespun way with words such as: "Man can live three weeks without food, three days without water. But he can't live three minutes without hope." He also told stories against himself, recalling having told a guest who offered to clear up after dinner: "Don't do that. That's what I've got daughters for."

GORE VIDAL Palimpsest A MEMOIR. Wonderfully entertaining... it offers all the zing of a Dry Martini without the danger of getting drunk.

recalled

Big 'brothers' pull strings in Taiwan

Andrew Higgins in Taipei reports on the upsurge in organised crime and the problems of fighting gangs with political clout

SOMEWHERE in the bowels of Taiwan's violent and increasingly powerful criminal underworld, "the brothers" are gloating over a set of photographs recording their latest exploit. They show a terror-stricken MP cowering in a locked dog cage dressed only in his underwear. A sign on the metal bars reads: "Enforcing justice on behalf of Heaven". The caged man is Liao Hsuehkuang, a maverick independent MP known as the "Robin Hood" of politics because of his frequent run-ins with an alliance of big business and mobsters that lurks beneath the shiny surface of Taiwan's tiger economy. He was abducted from his home in the middle of the night last weekend by three

masked men armed with an automatic rifle and electric stun gun. Gagged, blindfolded and handcuffed, he was bundled into a car and driven to the edge of a cemetery in wooded hills east of Taipei. There the waist-high cage was waiting. The kidnappers locked him inside, sprinkled powder to keep away poisonous snakes and took photographs before fleeing. "This time was just a warning. They did not want to kill me, just humiliate me to teach a lesson," said Mr Liao, now back home recovering from his ordeal. He was freed by police after a woman heard his cries for help. "Next time will be far more dangerous. They can cut off my legs, chop off my ears or break my neck. These people can do anything they want."

The abduction, the second mob-linked assault on an MP in three months, has put a grim spotlight on the power of Taiwan's increasingly fearless underworld of criminal "brothers". A week before Mr Liao's kidnapping, gangsters seized members of a professional basketball team as part of a scheme to fix games for an illegal gambling racket. "I had been waiting for this day for a long time," said Mr Liao, who first made powerful enemies by taxing profits from property speculation. "The country is controlled by the gangs. They are not just street hoods anymore but corporations. They are rich and getting richer." Known in Chinese as the "black way", the mob, according to official police estimates, encompasses at least

125 organised crime gangs whose nearly 6,000 members include businessmen and politicians as well as thuggish enforcers. The ruling Kuomintang or Nationalist Party (KMT) has a long history of association with gangsters. Before fleeing the mainland in 1949, the corruption-riddled KMT government of Chiang Kai-shek had close ties to the Green Gang, a Shanghai-based organisation involved in drugs, racketeering and gun-for-hire thuggery. Gangland hoods served as enforcers of Chiang's authoritarian rule. When the KMT decamped to Taiwan, many mobsters fled with it. But the current upsurge in the power of criminal gangs is linked more to democracy than dictatorship. As the KMT retooled its political machine after the lifting of martial law in 1988, "black" money became an essential lubricant in a system based on elections rather than coercion.

Vote-buying, much of it funded by shady businessmen with gangland links, taints the ruling KMT and opposition parties. Forty per cent of Taiwan's 883 city and county council members have been indicted for bribery. In Tainan county, 54 of 80 members have come under investigation. Several MPs, known as the Legislative Yuan, have mob links. The public has grown weary and cynical as dirty money corrupts elections and contaminates bureaucracy. Sixty-three per cent of Taiwan residents, according to a poll earlier this year conducted by National Chengchi University, consider officials corrupt. Only 20 per cent believe their bureaucracy clean. Ma Yung-shou, a Harvard-educated lawyer who led a three-year crackdown as justice minister, says such perceptions reflect the government's success in bringing politicians, policemen, bureau-

crats and even army officers to book. "Ask people about corruption and they will say it is very bad. They read about it all the time in the newspapers. But this is because we are prosecuting people."

apparently fearful of prosecution, President Lee Teng-hui recently demoted Mr Ma to minister without portfolio, a post that makes him less threatening to corrupt power-brokers. "If I didn't go after the big ones I probably would not have had to go," Mr Ma said. "Once organised crime spreads its influence it goes everywhere."

The KMT has a majority of only one seat in parliament and can ill-afford to antagonise sympathetic MPs, no matter how murky their background. It now promises a tough new law to fight organised crime, but Mr Ma's fate suggests that political concerns will prevail over promises of clean government. But so hazy are the rules governing power and money in Taiwan that the abducted MP, Mr Liao, became embroiled in an embezzlement scandal himself. He dismisses the charges as a frame-up by rich foes desperate to deter other towns from copying his special tax. Convicted, Mr Ma to minister without portfolio, a post that makes him less threatening to corrupt power-brokers. "If I didn't go after the big ones I probably would not have had to go," Mr Ma said. "Once organised crime spreads its influence it goes everywhere."

'Our mobsters are more interested in rigging bids than peddling drugs. It's more lucrative'

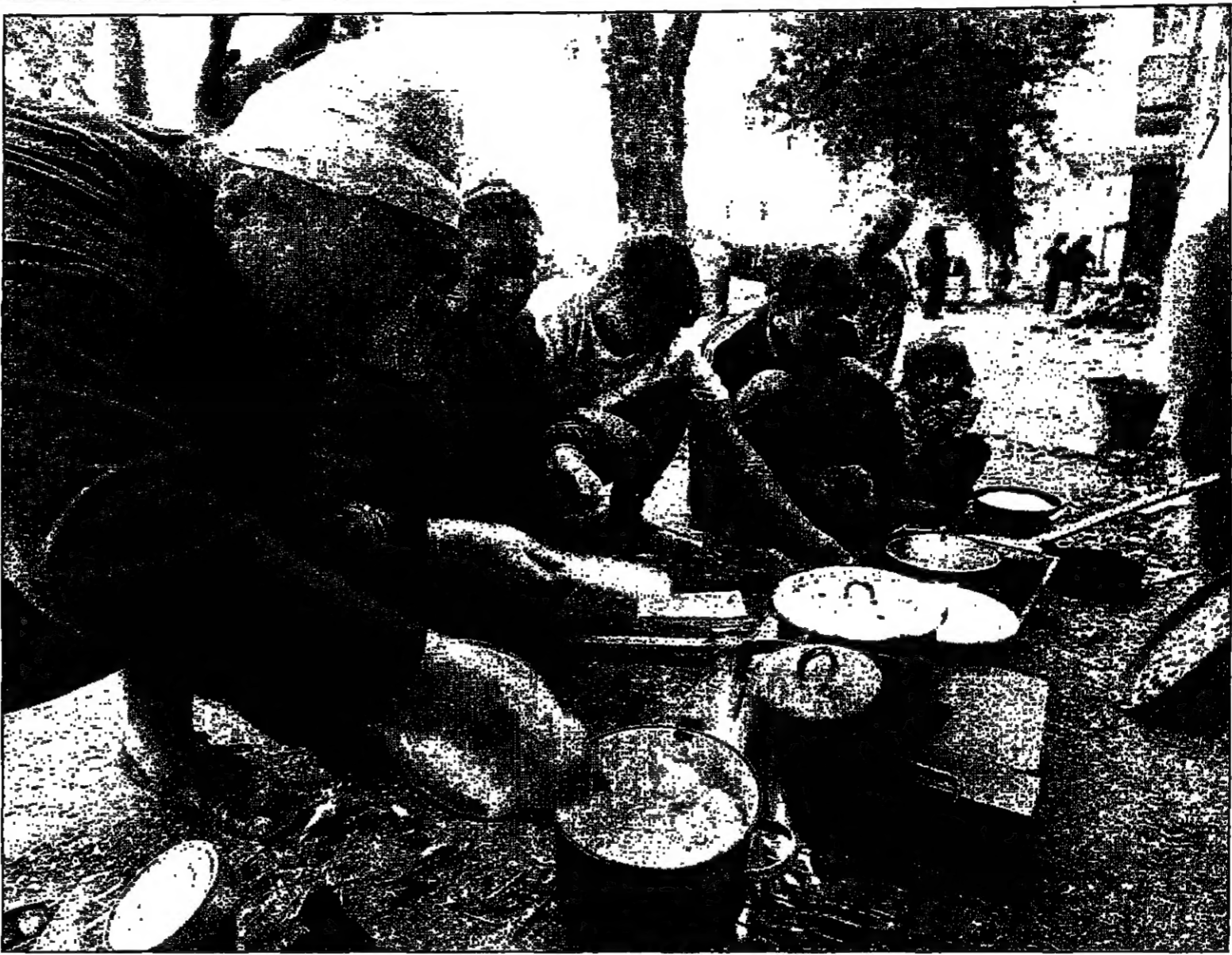
But any serious attempt to tackle the problem is fraught with political peril. Unlike its old enemy, the Chinese Communist Party, the KMT no longer has a pliant judiciary and obedient press to ensure that only designated scapegoats get caught. Under pressure from powerful KMT grandees

Lebed comes unstuck as troops attack

James Meek in Moscow

RUSSIA'S would-be peacemaker in Chechnya, Alexander Lebed, bowed before the power of the Moscow establishment yesterday and agreed to work with the interior minister he has publicly denounced. His decision came as the ceasefire he brought about seemed on the verge of collapse. Last night, the Chechen rebel spokesman, Movladi Udugov, reported an all-out attack by federal forces on the centre of the capital Grozny, and accused the Russian side of flagrantly violating a truce agreement. President Boris Yeltsin's new press secretary, Sergei Yastrzhembsky, said yesterday that the Russian leader had instructed Gen Lebed and the interior minister, General Anatoly Kulkov, to stay in their posts. The contradictory nature of Mr Yeltsin's latest reported instructions to Gen Lebed strengthened doubts about the ill leader's ability or inclination to back a single policy on Chechnya. That means the conflict will continue to be used as a political football in Moscow.

Gen Lebed's reputation as a straight-talking politician, and his previously good relationship with the media, will be further dented by his denial yesterday that he had ever given a back-me-or-sack-me ultimatum to Mr Yeltsin. In a press conference on Friday, he blamed Gen Kulkov for prolonging the war, and said: "It falls to you, Boris Nikolayevich [Yeltsin], to make a difficult choice: either Lebed, or Kulkov." Yesterday he said: "Those who took my statement as an ultimatum to the president obviously forgot that I passed through a good army school and remember who the commander-in-chief is in this country." Gen Lebed made it clear he still blamed Gen Kulkov for the bloody disaster in Chechnya two weeks ago. "We need to understand who specifically is responsible for the



Women in Grozny prepare food outdoors yesterday, making the most of a calm day during the fragile ceasefire

PHOTOGRAPH: MINDAUGAS KULIUS

rebels' penetration into Grozny, which resulted in the deaths of 265 federal troops and the wounding of more than 1,000. I think Kulkov is guilty." Mr Yastrzhembsky said yesterday that Mr Yeltsin had ordered Gen Lebed to ensure that all rebel blockades were removed from state buildings, military units and command posts in Grozny and to restore "the system of law and order operating in the city on August 5 [the eve of the rebel attack]". In a contradictory instruction, Mr Yeltsin ordered Gen Lebed to ensure Russian troops were withdrawn from Chechnya by September 1. If the troops were withdrawn, the rebels would control the republic. As fighting flared up across Grozny yesterday, rebel sources claimed local Russian commanders had refused to sign an agreement setting up a joint commission to supervise the ceasefire without an undertaking by the separatists to leave the city. Last week, Mr Yeltsin signed a decree giving Gen Lebed complete authority over federal armed units, government officials and expenditures in Chechnya. There is little sign he has been able to exercise this authority so far. If Gen Lebed himself turns out to have authorised the latest reported action in Chechnya, he will lose the high level of trust he has built up with senior rebel leaders. Mr Yeltsin has not been seen in public since his brief, wooden appearance at his inauguration on August 9. He is said to be working two to three hours a day in the Kremlin or at his dacha. Mr Yastrzhembsky denied foreign media reports that Mr Yeltsin, who had two heart attacks last year, might travel to Switzerland for heart bypass surgery or even have a heart transplant. Another press spokesman said a health memorandum on Mr Yeltsin, which Time magazine claimed to have obtained, had not come from the Kremlin or the government's Central Clinical Hospital.

News in brief

Children suffer in Sudan camp
Around 840 children are being held in inhumane conditions at a camp in the Sudanese desert, a human rights organisation said. Some 450 of the youngsters were picked up after demonstrations in September last year, the World Organisation against Torture said. Other children had been rounded up in a "clean-up" campaign of the market at Omdurman near the capital Khartoum two years ago. — AP.

Belgrade air crash
A Russian Ilyushin-76 heavy transport plane, carrying 10 crew and two other people, crashed near Belgrade airport in Yugoslavia early yesterday after turning back and attempting an emergency landing. It was believed there were no survivors. — Reuter.

Flood victim
A frightened lion at Liuzhou zoo, south China, was so shocked at the sight of water pouring into its cage that it leaped over and died, becoming the latest victim of widespread flooding. — Reuter.

Legal cannabis
The government of the canton of Zurich approved a proposal

"Antarctic dried fruit normally requires a lot of soaking, in the case of dates at least 10 minutes' hard work with a geology hammer as well."

G2 page 4

No hope in Spain for African boat people

Julia Hayley in Madrid

THE stream of North Africans trying to enter Spain has been swelling, with more than 1,000 "wet-backs" having been detained at sea this year and another 600 ashore, but a humanitarian group estimates this is only a quarter of those who have crossed the Strait this summer. The Spanish authorities suspect that Moroccan middlemen, who charge about \$70 for a cramped and waterlogged crossing, are using the August 23 deadline to increase their trade. "Mafias in neighbouring countries are getting rich by promising poor immigrants the chance of legalisation, which is an obvious falsehood," said José Torres Hurtado, the central government representative in Andalusia. It is not only the Civil Guard on the south coast who are struggling with the influx — the three-month-old Popular Party government in

were approaching the beaches of Tarifa. Yesterday, about two dozen in a tiny boat were picked up. More than 1,000 "wet-backs" have been detained at sea this year and another 600 ashore, but a humanitarian group estimates this is only a quarter of those who have crossed the Strait this summer. The Spanish authorities suspect that Moroccan middlemen, who charge about \$70 for a cramped and waterlogged crossing, are using the August 23 deadline to increase their trade. "Mafias in neighbouring countries are getting rich by promising poor immigrants the chance of legalisation, which is an obvious falsehood," said José Torres Hurtado, the central government representative in Andalusia. It is not only the Civil Guard on the south coast who are struggling with the influx — the three-month-old Popular Party government in

Madrid is also on the defensive. The government raised a storm of protest at the end of July when it deported 103 people gathered in the Spanish North African enclave of Melilla, by loading them on to planes with their hands bound, drugging them with tranquilisers and taking them to the Canary Islands for distribution to their countries of origin. "It's not the pattern we want to follow," the interior minister Jaime Mayor Oreja said, adding that only two of the five planeloads of Africans had been given tranquilisers and that the drug in question was a sedative used to calm hyperactive children. "Around the same time customs officials stopped 16 people with false passports who had arrived at Madrid from Equatorial Guinea. A week later police put them on a return flight to Malabo, capital of the former Spanish west African colony, but the

immigrants were returned to the airport detention centre after complaints were made about their behaviour on the flight. Equatorial Guinea then said it would not accept them and Spain issued veiled threats until it transpired they had passed through Malabo as transit passengers only. Last week the 15 (one had escaped in the meantime) were finally flown to Nigeria. Spain has relatively few legal immigrants — less than half a million in a population of nearly 40 million — and has offered to legalise those who have valid temporary residence permits and have been living here since before the beginning of this year. The interior ministry said it had received more than 13,000 requests by early July, with Moroccans the largest single group. The flood of hopefuls risking their lives in the Strait should abate towards the end

of the week, but a steady trickle, predominantly Moroccans and Algerians, is likely to continue. Spain's gross domestic product (GDP) per capita may be only 76 per cent of the European Union average, but it is still more than 10 times that of Morocco, whose GDP for a population of 27 million is only \$1,385 per head.

Mammoth task or white elephant?

Tim Radford Science Editor

JAPANESE scientists in search of the sperm of a woolly mammoth are planning to fertilise an elephant's eggs and recreate a creature that died out in Siberia after the last ice age. In a scientific project that has chased the film Jurassic Park, Kazufumi Goto, a geneticist and veterinarian at Kagoshima university, and his colleague Shoji Okutsu left Japan yesterday for northern Siberia, where mammoth corpses have been preserved in permafrost. Mr Goto said that finding DNA in good condition would be the key to his at-

tempt to use eggs from live elephants to produce half-mammoth, half-elephant offspring. Over several generations, a creature genetically close to the prehistoric one could be "bred back", he said. "If successful, we may be able to revive other extinct species using the same process." Experts in Britain were sceptical. "Mammoths were around 5,000 years ago," said Dr Robin Cocks of the Natural History Museum. "It is just conceivable that they might find some DNA from mammoths in frozen conditions. The next step in the chain is to find some semen that would be viable. Now this is where we get into extremely low chances — but



Wanted: mammoth DNA

mule — infertile. Dr Cocks said: "You would end up with a different animal, which was neither an elephant nor an old mammoth." Dinosaurs died out 65 million years ago and the idea of retrieving DNA from Tyrannosaurus Rex has so far proved a fantasy. But researchers have dreamt of mammoth resurrection for more than a decade. "It would be a total freak, of course," Dr Cocks said. "Frankly, it is not something I would wish to see a lot of money invested in. A lot of people would regard this as meddling with nature, and I think ... we could find better things to do with our time and money."

Muslim rebel hugs Ramos and reveals peace deal

AP in Malabang

THE Philippines president and a rebel leader embraced yesterday and announced the end of a Muslim rebellion lasting 26 years and costing 150,000 lives.

"We have agreed to end the war," the Muslim leader, Nur Misuari, said after the meeting with President Fidel Ramos. A final peace agreement will be signed in Manila on September 2.

Officials say they plan to integrate 5,500 of the 17,000 guerrillas into the military and 1,500 into the national police.

In a breakthrough in June, Mr Misuari — leader of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) — and government negotiators agreed to a preliminary peace pact to end the fighting. The rebel front will control a new council which will oversee development projects in 14 southern provinces for three years.

Elections will then be held for an autonomous government covering those of the 14 provinces which vote in a plebiscite to join a new Muslim region. The rebels consider these provinces their Muslim homeland, but generations of Christian settlers have come to dominate. Some members of the Philippines Congress, which must approve portions of the peace plan, have voiced opposition to it. But Mr Misuari said he had received assurances of support from congressional leaders.

The final peace agreement is expected to be finalised in Jakarta, Indonesia, at the end of this month. Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim country, has hosted a series of formal peace talks.

Other Muslim countries have also promised to provide development aid to the southern Philippines if the agreement goes through, but it may not bring complete peace. Two other smaller Muslim rebel groups, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Abu Sayyaf, say they oppose the pact.

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مكتبة القرآن

End of line for gang warfare

Phil Gunson in Belize City discovers how the former colony's own version of Dirty Harry cleaned up its LA-style street wars

IF BELIZE'S largest town (population less than 50,000) had an inner city, Majestic Alley would be it. Named after the old Majestic Theatre, rather than for any intrinsic majesty of its own, this run-down, weed-infested street is the heart of gangland in the former British colony.

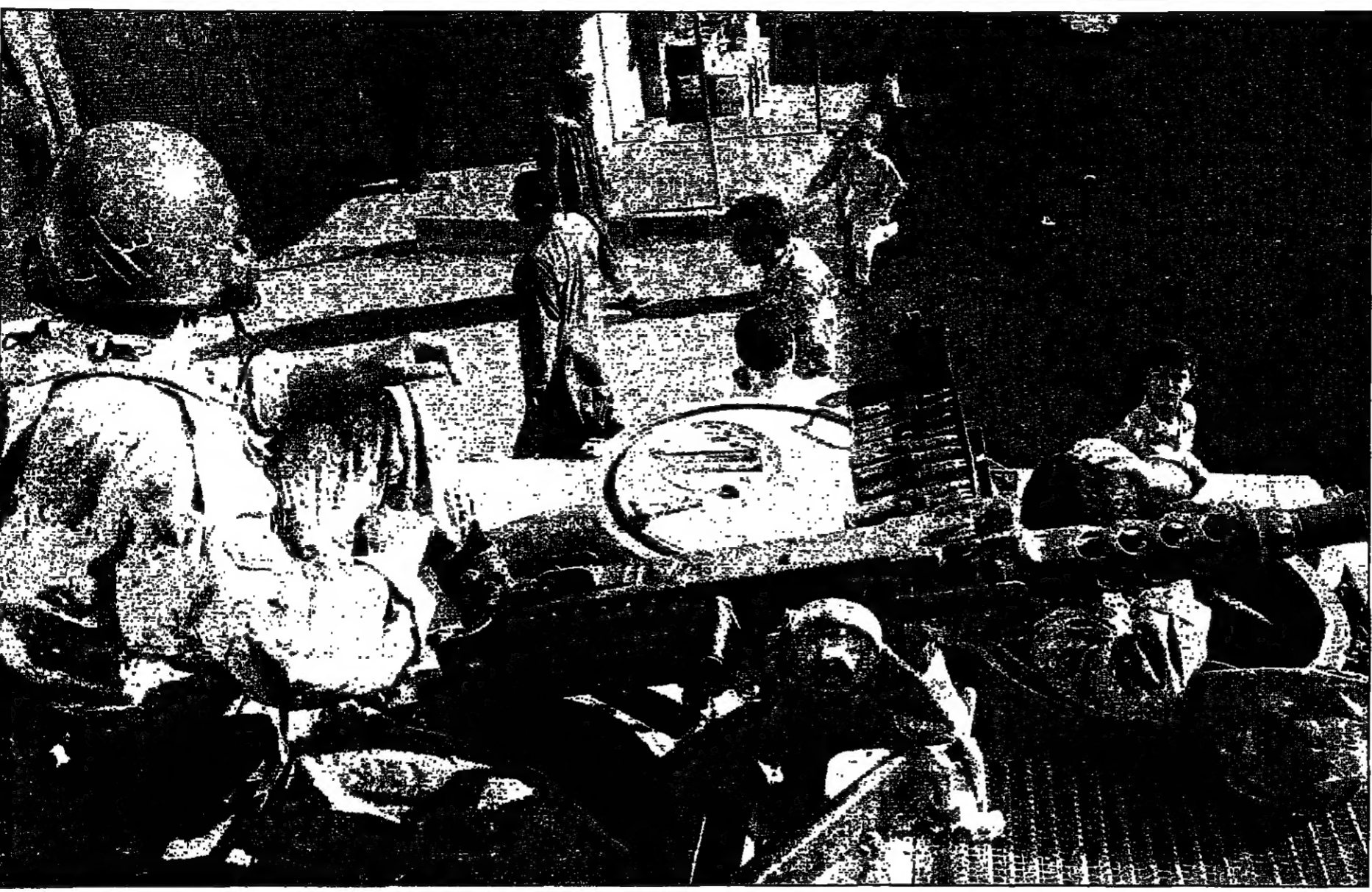
Graffiti proclaim this to be "Crips" turf — a reminder that, as recently as two years ago, just walking down the alley in daylight would have been a risky venture. For anyone affiliated to the rival "Bloods" clan, it would have been suicidal. In just a few years up to 1995, the city recorded 89 gang-related killings. Though the underlying social problems were home-grown, the style was a conscious imitation of inner-city Los Angeles, where many *émigré* Belizeans live.

"For a small community such as Belize," says the deputy prime minister Dean Barrow, "the figures were quite staggering." In the past 18 months, however, the gang wars have not claimed a single victim, thanks to a scheme devised by a police inspector once regarded as the "Dirty Harry" of Belize City. "It was a vicious circle," says Edward Broaster. "They'd go to jail, they'd

Supervised by the new Conscious Youth Development Council (CYDC), some former gunfighters are now building pavements as part of the Belize City infrastructure project, while others learn fishing or other skills. One-time sworn enemies work alongside one another, with quarrels patched up through a conflict resolution procedure that occupies most of the CYDC staff's time. On Flamboyant Street, the words "RIP Omar" mark the spot where 23-year-old Javier's brother was shot dead — one of three killings on that street alone. Now Javier, known as Stagger, works on a pavement-building team which includes his brother's killer. It's hard to judge the sin-

cerity of Stagger's conversion to peaceful coexistence. Asked if he finds it hard, the Rastafarian replies: "No man, Jah take care of all that. I never pick up no gun to kill no one. I make Jah my gun, my weapon." Like other former gang members, Stagger complains about low rates of pay on the work scheme, and attributes past violence to poverty and lack of opportunity. "It like slavery time," he says, referring both to the scheme and to Belizean society in general. But despite the odds, and unlike similar experiments in other places affected by gang wars, the programme has kept the peace since its inception in February 1995. So successful has it been, in fact, that neighbouring

countries, such as El Salvador, and the city of Los Angeles have sent observers to study its methods. "I think we have caught it in time to stop it expanding," says Nuri Muhammad, who once lived in South Central LA and now heads the CYDC. "Now what we need is additional resources to keep the programme going." The CYDC has its critics. There are those who say the gang leaders are receiving under-the-table payments to keep the truce. Others argue that violent youths are in effect being rewarded for having been "bad boys". But the scheme retains the support of both main parties. "They know this is not something to play with," says Insp Broaster. "If anyone interferes with it, we'll all be the losers."



A Jordanian soldier watches from an armoured vehicle in the southern city of Karak yesterday, where troops were deployed to quell three days of rioting over bread price rises. The curfew was lifted for two hours, as the prime minister, Abdul Karim Eabarit, brushed aside calls for his resignation over the issue. Leader comment, page 8. PHOTOGRAPH BY YOUSEF ALLAN

News in brief

Killing 'thwarted Colombia coup plot'

A MILITARY coup against Colombia's President Ernesto Samper was aborted last year days before it was due to take place, after a veteran political leader singled out to head a new government was assassinated, the Semana news magazine said yesterday. The influential weekly said the coup was plotted by opposition politicians and "a very close-knit group within the army" and was due on November 11, 1995. According to Semana, the coup was only called off because of the killing on November 2, 1995, of Alvaro Gómez Hurtado, a former presidential candidate and outspoken Samper critic who was supposed to head a civilian-military junta. Semana said its report was prompted by a television interview last week with the United States ambassador, Myles Frechette, in which he commented for the first time on talks he had had with a group of civilians who approached him in August 1995 to ask about possible US support for an anti-Samper coup. The magazine quoted unidentified military sources as saying a Colombian general had also discussed a possible coup with Mr Frechette, but the US envoy had rejected the idea out of hand. — *Reuters, Bogotá.*

80 die in Algeria massacres

MUSLIM guerrillas disguised as policemen have massacred 63 people including children, women and old men in Algeria, the London-based newspaper *Al-Hayat* said yesterday. Witnesses told the newspaper that about 100 gunmen set up a fake roadblock on Saturday and stopped two buses on the road that connects the provinces of M'Sila and Batna. The gunmen, armed with shotguns, knives and axes, and wearing "dirty uniforms", killed all those holding Batna identity papers, the witnesses said. *Al-Hayat* quoted its sources as saying the aim of the massacre was to "create tribal strife". In a separate incident on Thursday, two men slit the throat of a muezzin in his mosque in an Algiers suburb, the Algerian newspaper *El-Watan* said. The same day, 10 Muslim rebels slit the throats of 17 men after stopping a bus at a fake roadblock in Sidi Laacjal, 180 miles south of Algiers. — *Reuters, Cairo.*

Japanese kidnap victim freed

A JAPANESE businessman kidnapped by armed gunmen after attending a company baseball game in Tijuana, Mexico, has been released, a company spokesman said yesterday. Mamoru Konno, who was seized on August 10, is the president of the California-based Sanyo Video Components, which has an assembly plant just over the border in Tijuana. Two Mexican sisters kidnapped with him were released the following day. Hours after the abduction, Mr Konno's secretary received a phone call demanding \$2 million (£1.3 million) for his safe return. Sanyo officials said they were willing to do whatever was needed for his release. It is not clear whether a ransom was paid. — *AP, San Diego.*

Rwandans flee Burundi camp

THE United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) said about 8,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees returned home from Burundi yesterday as Burundi's Tutsi-dominated army stepped up the forced repatriation which started at the weekend. Refugees in Burundi's Magara Camp said earlier yesterday that the Burundian army had launched a campaign of intimidation and killed three of their comrades on Sunday to try to force them back to Rwanda. They said that since last Wednesday soldiers had fired into the air, burnt down their huts and beaten up refugees at the camp in north-west Burundi which houses more than 40,000 displaced people. Refugees said the troops had been accompanied by "Burundian people". — *Reuters, Nairobi.*

EMU test for Sweden

SWEDEN'S finance minister, Erik Asbrink, said yesterday that some requirements for the country's membership of European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) would require changes to the Swedish constitution. Mr Asbrink said the Swedish parliament would decide in the autumn of 1997 whether Sweden would apply for membership of the currency union. The single currency would call for changes to the Swedish constitution, since it would necessitate the abolition of the Riksbank's monopoly on issuing banknotes. "Since changes to the constitution require two parliamentary decisions with an election in between, the electorate will be able to make its views known in the 1998 election," he said. — *Reuters, Stockholm.*

Libya's 'poison gas' deal

GERMAN authorities confirmed yesterday that three German businessmen are suspected of shipping computer technology to Libya that could be used for making poison gas. Two men were arrested on August 9 and are in investigative custody; a third is on the run. The computer equipment was believed to have been shipped to Libya via Belgium. "The equipment was allegedly destined for a chemical weapons plant where it could be used for making the poison gases Sarin and Soman," the state prosecutor Ralf Mühlmann told reporters. He said the equipment, worth 3.3 million marks (£1.4 million), included "highly modern computers for the chemical industry" made by the German company Siemens. The computers were not designed for making chemical weapons, but they could be used for such purposes, he said. Mr Mühlmann said the equipment was assembled in Mönchengladbach and then smuggled to the Belgian port of Antwerp, from where it was delivered to Libya by the state-run Libyan maritime shipping agency. — *AP, Mönchengladbach.*

Australians rally over cuts

PROTESTERS rallied outside Australia's parliament in Canberra yesterday on the eve of a budget expected to make cuts of A\$4 billion (£2 billion). Some, using sledgehammers and a battering ram, smashed through glass doors and scuffled with police in the public foyer for two hours. A few protesters, chanting "Johnny, we're coming for you boys", got within 100 yards of the office of the prime minister, John Howard. Demonstrations were also held in four other cities, but financial markets rallied in expectation of a tough programme aimed at turning a budget deficit of more than \$5 billion into a surplus within two years. — *Reuters, Canberra.*

Miss Universe told to diet

THE REIGNING Miss Universe, Alicia Machado of Venezuela, has been told to go on a crash diet or risk losing her crown, Venezuelan beauty contest officials said yesterday. The organisers have given her two weeks to lose 27 pounds. If she fails, the title will be handed to the runner-up, Taryn Mancini of Aruba, in the Lesser Antilles. "She has various swimsuit contracts and they're not happy that she has gone a bit chubby," an official said. Ms Machado, aged 18, was the fourth Venezuelan to win Miss Universe in Las Vegas in May. "As soon as she won she started to eat," said the official, adding that she had a weakness for pasta and cakes. — *Reuters, Caracas.*

Clinton enters the fray on key tax issue

Martin Walker in Washington

PRESIDENT Clinton stepped back from a blanket vow against raising taxes yesterday, and began the uphill process of trying to discredit the Republican proposal for a huge \$550 billion (£366.6 billion) tax cut, the biggest weapon in their campaign. "Smoke and mirrors," Mr Clinton said in a CBS interview. "This is irresponsible, playing havoc with America's future." But taxes are swiftly becoming the most vibrant issue of the campaign, in which Mr Clinton is offering his own more modest and more targeted tax cuts of \$110 billion, aimed mainly at families with children and subsidising college fees.

cent tax cut — with Clinton on the No side and the Republicans on the Yes side — this election can be won," said Pat Buchanan, who has endorsed the Dole campaign. Taxes are now the theme each politician wants to address. Ross Perot, in his first interview since accepting the presidential nomination of his Reform Party, also tore into the Republican tax cuts. "Remember we tried this in the 1980s, this trickle-down economics. Even Republicans such as Bob Dole called it wacko economics. It caused the debt to go through the roof. We can't have that happen again. "This is Washington at its worst. It's not rational. It's not based on logical planning and decision-making," said the Texan billionaire, having just made his own rational decision to take an offered \$30 million of federal election funds, at the price of limiting

his personal contribution to \$50,000. Unhushed by the criticism, the Republicans were pressing even further yesterday the tax-cutting theme which has proved a success on the campaign trail. The biggest cheer for Mr Dole came when he promises "the end of the IRS as we know it". The Internal Revenue Service is the vast collection agency for income taxes. Jack Kemp, Mr Dole's vice-presidential candidate, is promising the tax cut is "just the first step on our plan for a radical and dramatic overhaul of the tax system to make it fairer and flatter". The Clinton campaign team, startled by the impact of Mr Clinton's taxes on an election, they assumed were still worried about the deficit, are scrambling to respond. They are running television advertisements which attack the tax cut as a ridicu-

lous giveaway, and another which quotes Senator Alfonse D'Amato, a Dole campaign chairman, saying they will have to finance the tax cuts from the Medicare and social security budgets. But the prospect of \$1,500 — about £20 a week — in tax cuts for a family of four on an average income of \$35,000 is proving to be a winner with the public. The Republican proposals include a 15 per cent cut in income taxes for all, a halving of the capital gains tax to 14 per cent, a \$500-per-child tax credit and the eradication of Mr Clinton's taxes on the social security receipts of wealthy retirees. It has something for everyone, but rather more for the wealthy and the entrepreneurial. Even allowing for

the rosy Republican assumptions about the extra growth and lower interest rates this expansionist policy will deliver, the cuts will have to be financed either by more debt or by the wholesale eradication of chunks of the federal budget. Mr Dole insists he will not touch Medicare, social security or recommitments on the national debt, and promises to spend more on defence. His savings will therefore have to come from "domestic discretionary spending", just \$30 billion a year, or 16 per cent of the \$1.5 billion annual budget. This covers the Federal Aviation Administration, the National Parks, the FBI education, housing, and the space administration NASA. Already criticised for half an across-the-board cut of 25 per cent in the latest Republican budget, Mr Dole's promises would slash the budgets for these agencies in half.

One killed as gunmen fire at police station in Haiti

AP in Port-au-Prince

GUNMEN opened fire on the National Palace and police headquarters yesterday in an apparent effort to destabilise Haiti's new government. A civilian working at the police station was killed and a policeman was slightly wounded, said the Port-au-Prince police chief, Jean-Yves Tréville. The Legislative Palace was also strafed by bullet holes, Radio Haiti reported. UN soldiers and Haitian police officers returned fire. The attackers took over the police station for half an hour, a radio station and a diplomatic source said. A UN spokesman denied that report and said: "Things are under control." UN helicopters took to the air and patrolled the city. Radio Vision 2000 said that gunmen wearing the uniform of the disbanded Haitian army took over the police station for half an hour, possibly in retaliation for the arrest of about 20 former soldiers. The soldiers were arrested on Saturday at the party headquarters of a far-right politician, the radio station reported. It broadcast a statement by the Committee for Soldiers' Demands, calling for their release and the resignation of President René Preval. There have been death threats against President Preval and the former president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Gunfire rings out almost nightly in Port-au-Prince. President Preval, who was installed in February, has blamed the attacks on soldiers in the former army that ousted Mr Aristide in 1991 and was disbanded after a US-led military intervention restored Mr Aristide from exile in October 1994.

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Greens nominate Nader

Jonathan Freedland in Washington

ONE of the best-known names in American political activism was added to a crowded presidential field yesterday when Ralph Nader was nominated candidate of the US Green Party. Mr Nader — whose safety campaign in the 1980s ensured all US cars were fitted with seat belts — is now on the ballot in 12 states and the Green Party hopes to have him on at least 25 by polling day. The nomination was the climax of the five-day Green Gathering '96, held at the University of California at the Los Angeles campus at Westwood, part of city's mascot ball, the Greens had no balloons, de-

claring them harmful to the environment. Delegates' credentials were printed on recycled paper and red, white and blue bunting gave way to flags of green and white. Even the US flags on display featured 50 sunflowers instead of stars. Moreover, the 850 delegates at Westwood actually debated policy rather than merely acting as props in a television spectacular. Issues like Eco-Feminism and Ending Corporate Rule in America were certainly not on the agendas of the other two parties. Mr Nader, aged 62, is not even a party member and has little time for its more radical ideas, which include the legalisation of same-sex marriages. He has said he will campaign only on issues he agrees with

like consumer rights and improved democracy. Confronted recently by poll evidence that shows he could split the anti-Republican vote in California — so coining Mr Clinton the White House — Mr Nader said the president would deserve it. "He's been consistently on the side of big business when it's conflicted with labour and consumers," he told a television interviewer, adding that the two main parties were now effectively one. "It's the Tweedle-Dee, Tweedle-Do Republican-Democrats, which are essentially a party of, by and for big business." Mr Nader will not take part in this autumn's televised presidential debates. He is not on the ballot in all 50 states and is therefore ineligible.

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A monarchy in trouble

If the Queen can discuss her role, why can't we?

FIVE WEEKS ago Michael Portillo was in no doubt about people who wished "to meddle with the monarchy". They did it at "the nation's peril". So what does Mr Portillo — and the Prime Minister who is also adamantly opposed to any constitutional change — now say about the latest proposal from an obscure planning body called The Way Ahead Group? Among other royal reforms it is discussing are abolition of Civil List payments, allowing women equal rights to succeed to the throne, ending the monarch's traditional role as head of the Church of England, streamlining the royal family to cut out all but direct heirs, and permitting heirs to marry Catholics. Five weeks ago when the Fabian Society produced its royal family proposals, Conservatives lined up in opposition even suggesting the Society was acting as a front for Labour. Yesterday's reform package, which is reported to be on the agenda of a special committee of royals selected by the Queen, was received in silence by Conservative party spokesmen.

It was George VI who described the royal household as "not a family — we're a firm." Like any sensible firm in trouble, the royal family is reassessing its role. Indeed, contrary to the pusillanimous approach of both major parties, the Queen has openly acknowledged the need for change. As she noted in her 1992 City of London speech: "No institution — City, monarchy, whatever, should expect to be free from the scrutiny of those who give it their loyalty and support — not to mention those who don't. This sort of questioning can also act and it should do as an effective engine for change."

Few issues are more widely debated by the British public — in pubs, clubs and home — than the royal family. Yet the two major parties still shrink from engaging in a serious debate — and it

was only the grassroots who forced it on to the agenda at the Liberal Democrat conference two years ago. Now that Buckingham Palace has conceded the royals are conducting their own strategic review, we might at last be able to have a sensible public debate. It should certainly not just be left to the royals themselves. Even the most obstinuous constitutional commentator, Lord St John of Fawley, described yesterday's reported proposals as "sensible moves" except the disestablishment of the Church, which he declared would be "a public repudiation of religion". Tell that to the Welsh, Scotch or Irish all with disestablished churches, the Irish as long as 1869.

Republicanism is not restricted to the Left. As the recent Fabian pamphlet noted, the logical end of a free market, libertarian Thatcherite agenda is the end of all hereditary institutions even though they may not say so. If you roll back the state, the Crown goes with it. But Tony Blair has been equally illogical. In his John Smith memorial lecture earlier this year, he sounded the right democratic note ("It is in principle wrong and absurd that people should wield power on the basis of birth, not merit or election") but restricted its application to the House of Lords, failing to explain why it did not equally apply to the monarchy. Yet reform need not necessarily lead to republicanism. The Fabians pointed to a middle way (removing the political role of the monarch, transferring all prerogative powers to Parliament, introducing a written constitution and a disestablished church) but leaving the Queen as a ceremonial monarch in a democratic country. There is 1,000 years of history — and large royal estate incomes — at stake. The issue is too important to be decided by a cosy inside circle. The public has a right to take part. There must be a full-blown public debate.

A monarchy in trouble (part two)

Jordan's riots may mean King Hussein is losing his touch

THE INGREDIENTS for a loaf of bread in Jordan, says King Hussein's government, are far too cheap. Nearly doubling the cost overnight is a necessary move towards more "rational" pricing — as recommended by the IMF. Our Middle East correspondent predicted over a month ago that this would inflict severe economic pain upon a population of whom at least 20 per cent are below the poverty line, and that there was fresh trouble ahead. Amman scoffed at such warnings, and pointed instead to the new one billion dollars package agreed with Western donors. But Jordan's poor can't eat foreign credits: the ingredients were there for making not just dearer bread but a very dangerous crisis.

The prospect of instability in Jordan, astride the main fault line in the Middle East, is so alarming that whenever it looks like happening it is energetically talked down. King Hussein has always weathered previous storms, including the 1989 riots over food price increases where he managed to distance himself from the unpopular policies and institute some cautious political reform. This time he has backed his prime minister Karim Kabariti energetically and has dissolved the current session of parliament, silencing the one forum where criticism could legitimately be expressed. The King has also claimed that "foreign circles" (meaning Iraq) is being treated with derision in the streets. The riots have been too widespread to be attributed solely to political

agitation from opposition parties including the Iraqi Baath Party. The causes of popular complaint are no great mystery. Increased regional stability and the peace treaty with Israel have created conditions for a mini-boom. Tourism and foreign trade are expanding fast, and the Amman skyline is being transformed by real estate investment. But there is a widespread perception (among the middle class as well as the poor) that the economic benefits accrue only to a minority. No doubt the system of food subsidies has been open to abuse, but it is not those on the bread line who have benefited. Jordan is not the first country where uneven economic growth leads to increased inequality: elsewhere it has been a formula with explosive results.

In a country where the uncounted majority are Palestinians, the riots have taken place mostly among the Transjordanian population in areas known for their core support of King Hussein. But he has failed to carry his people with him in his light-footed diplomacy: at best, the opening to Israel is judged by results which have not yet been sufficiently forthcoming. Yesterday's statement from the Israeli foreign minister David Levy, praising the king for pursuing policies which were "important to Israel", is hardly a tactful move. In a region not known for the democracy it so badly needs, King Hussein has played a skillful game of survival for decades, but the Hashemite monarchy may now be losing its touch.

Desperately seeking the C2 vote

But Worcester Woman has many reasons to spurn the Tories

WORCESTER Woman is being wooed. Her suitor, Conservative Central Office, believes she can be persuaded to return to the Tory fold. Of all defectors from the Conservative camp, Worcester Woman is regarded as the easiest to recapture. Categorized by market researchers as a C2, she is aged between 35 and 44, married to a skilled manual worker with an average income of £18,000. She voted for Margaret Thatcher but is now attracted to Tony Blair — even a Tony Blair with demon eyes. True, Basil Donaghy still ended up voting for John Major in 1992. But there are many good reasons why Worcester Woman should not do so in 1997.

Attracted by Margaret Thatcher's right-to-buy policy, Worcester Woman bought her council home, traded up, and now like thousands of others is still trapped by negative equity. Worse still, she has seen what happened to her neighbours: like hundreds of thousands

of others, many are behind with their mortgage payments. Some are even more unfortunate. They were among the 500,000 who had their homes repossessed in the last decade, leaving them with nothing but debt.

Then there were the tax cuts, which John Major promised before the last election. His post-election budget should not be forgotten: the freeze on tax allowances, cuts to mortgage interest relief, VAT on domestic fuel and power, rise in national insurance contributions, new tax on insurance premiums, and even a new tax on holiday flights. Even with this year's reductions, Worcester Woman's family is still paying more tax than it was in 1992. She may consider the overcrowded classrooms, the insecurity of her own and her husband's job and the rise in crime. Then there is the air of sleaze that hangs over the government. . . . All suggest the lady is not for turning.



Letters to the Editor

Labour's own goals

WHEN Roy Hattersley criticised David Blunkett and, more recently, Gordon Brown, I thought it unhelpful but at least his comments focused on policy. But in attacking Peter Mandelson on a personal level (Blair told: focus on policies, August 19) Mr Hattersley has indulged in the same negative abuse so loved by the Conservative Party.

When will some people learn that internal attacks do nothing to help Labour win the next election. Winning a general election is not something the Party has done in two decades, including those years when Mr Hattersley was deputy leader. Now we are in a position to do so, and Peter Mandelson has been instrumental. Labour is extremely fortunate to have someone of his ability, dedication and integrity working to achieve the goals in which all of us share. David John Collins.

The Butchers, Station Road, Groombridge, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN9 9QX.

I HAVE just finished Mr Hattersley's political memoirs Who Goes Home, published

last year, in which he observes: "I was and remain one of Peter Mandelson's greatest admirers. He had worked for me — with great determination — during the 1992 leadership campaign. . . . The brilliance of Peter's performance during the 1997 election campaign is established beyond dispute. So is (or should be) his success in forcing Labour's publicity machine to face the realities of modern political life." A year seems to be a very long time in political judgments.

BRIAN Sedgemore pertinently illustrates the absurdity of the rag-bag of wingnuts about Peter Mandelson and Tony Blair's office. He complains that they are — shock, horror — trying to "give serious political issues a populist appeal". In other words, trying to connect with people. I win support for Labour policies, win the general election. Colin Byrnie, Coombe Farm Cottage, Alden Lane, Godalming, Surrey GU8 4AP.

AS ONE of the leaders of Old Labour who were responsible for its long years of failure in the political wilderness, Roy Hattersley should have the decency to keep silent and concentrate on writing novels, which, it has to be said, he is rather good at. John W Booth, 10 Westfield, Harlow, Essex CM18 6AB.

Study time spent in stacking supermarket shelves

TO PREPARE for an A Level examination a student has, on average, about five hours of tuition per week. As most students only study three subjects, they have about 15 hours of contact time per week. Their French or German equivalents, who study at least twice as many subjects, probably attend 25 to 30 lessons per week.

If our students were using the extra time for independent study, one could perhaps justify the situation. Unfortunately, many of them are working up to 20 hours per week, increasing the profits of supermarket chains.

Students in full-time post 16 education need a wider curriculum. The crucial question is whether the Government is willing to fund such a change. E Ross, 45 Hamilton Road, Colchester, Essex.

[INSTEAD of congratulating the students on their achievements, certain elements in society proclaim that some of these students are not worthy of their pass grades. It is unclear what such utterances achieve, but they are undoubtedly aimed at students from the public sector. If there is concern about the standard of A level examinations then it ought to come from the university authorities, who are ultimately responsible for the academic standards of the nation. As an admissions tutor of several years' experience, I

am enormously impressed by the determination of our applicants, who attain, and many exceed, our demanded high grades. Dr S N Nona, Undergraduates Admissions Tutor, Department of Optometry and Vision Sciences, UMIST, Manchester M60 1QD.

ACTING on your tips, my daughter secured a place in study at the university of her own choice, albeit at a different college. It took a 15 minute telephone conversation with the admissions tutor to arrange it. The first offer had taken about a year of form filling, predictions, interview offers, replies to offers, choice of first and insurance offer. Had her grades been good enough for the first offer, she would have had to take it, however much her wishes or circumstances may have changed. A lot of students are stuck with offers they can't refuse. The most unfair hit are those who get better grades than their teachers predicted. The whole system is wasteful and unjust. Ivan Hellmer, 47 Cromwell Avenue, London N6.

Letters to the Editor may be sent on 0171 837 4530 or sent to 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER, and by e-mail to letters@guardian.co.uk. Please include a full postal address and daytime telephone number, even in e-mailed letters.

Sex is a wheeze after asthma

MY EXTENDED family has five members suffering from asthma/hay fever — all born in June and suffering their worst symptoms in the summer months (Breath of Life — and hope, August 13). Around the end of August their afflictions become dramatically relieved and they tend to feel sexually frisky.

As someone who has suffered from asthma for



most of my life I welcome articles that raise the profile of the illness. But merely stating that four or five people die of asthma every day is insufficient. Later we are told that "up to two million (have) asthma" — the explanation given was mostly among people who by reason of extreme age could not expect to live long, we should be less concerned than if they were among those who could expect many more years. Jon Fairbairn, 18 Kimberley Road, Cambridge CB4 1HR.

Unbaptised

JONATHAN Pratt (letters, August 19) wonders how he can be unbaptised. Perhaps the Church of England should look to Norway, where there are formal procedures for "unjoining" the state church? Even so, having completed my forms in 1980, I was told I had to "unjoin" my little son as well and a long correspondence with a stubborn priest ensued; I simply could not imagine why my son, who was born in the States, and had never been baptised, should have to formally withdraw from the church. The church is extremely unhappy about all the defections, not least, I imagine, because leavers frequently discover that that part of their taxes which goes to the church may be signed over to another organisation! Professor Toril Swan, 68 Hillsborough Close, Oxford OX4 3SN.

Committing kerb suicide

JOANNA Moorhead (Will you kill a child today? August 17) misses the point that all road users — including pedestrians — share a responsibility for road safety. As a professional driver, I have witnessed countless incidents of careless, irresponsible and criminally dangerous driving. Aware of my own shortcomings as a driver, I try always to exercise the greatest care on the road. I am, however, frequently appalled at the cross stupidity of many pedestrians who step off the kerb without looking, often ignoring red pedestrian lights. Until all pedestrians are trained and made accountable for their own safety, the road accident statistics will continue to rise. Stuart Walker, 41 Gloucester Road, Waltham Forest, London E17 6AE.

The truth about Harold

THE Channel 4 programme Secret History which purported to reveal the reason for Harold Wilson's resignation as Prime Minister, broadcast on August 15, was an absolute distortion of the truth.

Harold had, years before, indicated to many people, including me, that he intended to give up when he reached 60. Moreover, the explanation given was completely contradictory since it showed on the one hand that senior figures in both British and American security services were out to discredit the Prime Minister, and then actually accused him of being paranoid.

Lord Hunt's comments were particularly disreputable since he was Cabinet Secretary with ultimate civil service responsibility for the secret services, reporting directly to Wilson, and yet he seems to have made no at-

tempt to deal with the disloyal element inside MI6. Moreover the charge that Wilson's health played a part in his decision to go was false as he continued to perform many public functions up until his operation for cancer. It is impossible to escape the conclusion that the programme was devised to repeat old sneers against Harold and Marjorie Walker, in an attempt to destroy the reputation of a Labour Prime Minister who won four general elections and carried through some very significant reforms for the benefit of the nation. That presumably is why names of Harold's closest personal and political colleagues, who knew exactly what did go on, were asked, or agreed to be interviewed. Tony Benn, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

A Country Diary

THE LONGMYND: From Leebotwood, passed the castle bank at Woolstanton, the lane rises steeply up the northern end of the Longmynd, whose half English half Welsh name characterises the hills of the Shropshire border country. The fields end as the cattle grid at the top of the bank is crossed, and suddenly all that can be seen is moorland and sky. And what a sky. The stiff breeze picks up any sound, any thought and, like the bumble bee, fires them across the heather plateau into the deep blue yonder. This place is called Robin Hood's Butts. Whether it had anything to do with the famous outlaw of Sherwood Forest is unlikely, but Robin Hood is also a pseudonym for the Green Man. The word "green" means mound, for archery practice and there are ancient burial mounds scattered here. Perhaps this is where the ritual sacrifice of the Green Man took place at harvest time. Who waits inside these mounds, perched high above

the lowlands where the combine harvesters plough like boats through golden lakes to get the grain in before the weather breaks?

But also means a hiding place for grouse shooters and the red grouse which were called in warm evenings just a couple of weeks ago are quiet. Perhaps they know all about the glorious twelfth. Looking west from the Wild Moor plateau, past a group of hill points with their long manes and tails streaming behind them in the wind, stands Caer Cawcaw, a steep, bare hill surmounted by the earthworks of a bronze age fort. This is one of a long line of hills — the Shropshire fault — which range like a string of islands ending with the Wrekin in the hazy plain of the north. These stubborn hills are crisscrossed with their strange names and even stranger stories, draw us to their summit winds up in the sky. And, as they have for centuries, provide a refuge for the Celtic heart. PAUL EVANS

Women poking fun at the male member

I WAS amused by parts of Rebecca Farnworth's account of her voyeurism on a Greek nudist beach (The bottom line in bathing, August 15).

It is on view. I very much doubt that you would have printed similarly derogatory descriptions of female breasts and genitals, especially if written by a male. In addition, Farnworth's account of the "half-headed" colonel's genitals ("As he

walked up and down, his tiny penis jiggled to attention") also gave the lie to the assertion, most often repeated by women, that it is only men who are obsessed with penis size. Richard Le Grande, Market Drayton, Shropshire.

Diary
Matthew Norman

THE Diary postbag bulges with praise for Harold Brooke-Baker's excellent Burke's Peerage World Book of series, in which people are offered "limited edition" copies of reference guides to those with the same name. We began with Lib Dem whip Lord Hoff whom peerage expert Harold addresses as "Mr Tor-doff" — and others are just as impressed. Geoffrey Taunton from Marlborough wrote back, informing Harry that he is not Mr J Taunton, and asking "if you ever become embarrassed about the stupidities to which you will stoop in order to try to make a little money?" Although impressed that "extensive research" into his namesakes was done in 14 countries, David Ljagddgrd regrets that none of them was Sweden, where his entire family lives. Meanwhile, Brian Dolan writes from Kent comparing this "scam" to a recent motor manufacturer's mail shot, in which a letter addressed to a Mr P Charles, Buckingham Palace, SW1, began: "Dear Mr Charles, How would you like to impress your neighbours by owning a brand new Rover car?"

WITH the Republicans so buoyant after their convention, the mind turns to their last successful presidential candidate. After he was selected to stand against Michael Dukakis, George Bush visited Britain for an interview with David Frost, who put it to him that some commentators thought he lacked gravitas. "Gravitas, gravitatum," said Mr Bush, hesitatingly. "But you're going to have to help me there." Marvellous stuff. Please God that Mr Dole proves even half as entertaining.

NEWS arrives of a puerile whispering campaign. The victim is Anthony "Fatty" Cheetham, the combative head of publishers Orion. Admittedly a rank outsider in any Mr Popularity contest, my chunky chum hardly deserves the "Fatty Fatty Cheetham" song now catching on at book launches. It is sung to the tune of Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, and the ironic lyric is: "Oh, Ay, Fatty Fatty Cheetham, Fatty Fatty Cheetham, We love you/ And our Fatty Fatty Cheetham loves us too." An infuriatingly naive, if not under the breath, lest he overhear, it climaxes: "Ay, ay, Fatty Fatty Cheetham/ Our fine fat feathered Fatty-Fatty-friend." Predictably, perhaps, Fatty was out at lunch when we rang to commiserate, and had failed to call us back by the close of play.

A WELSH farmer's attempt to stop Harrier pilots flying low over his land has backfired disastrously. When he painted the words "Piss off Biggles" in huge letters on the roof of his barn, the pilots — who are featured in BBC1's Defence of the Realm on Thursday — were so amused that they kept making detours to have a look. After a few especially deafening days, the farmer removed his message.

FOR anyone baffled by Shere Hite's decision to give up her American passport in favour of becoming a German national, the feminist author has now explained herself in print. Writing in New Times magazine, Ms Hite says she chose Germany for its "positive tradition of democracy and respect for individual human rights". So there we are.

IN what close observers are describing as arguably the most exciting charity news since the founding of Bolnisi Relief, Compassion magazine reports that a group of supermodels has come together to form... wait for it... "Determined Involved Supermodels Helping to End Starving" (DISHS). Details are sketchy, but the first event to be planned is a beach volleyball game at the Long Island Hamptons in New York State. Kate Moss was on the committee, so it is on the committee, but until she had felt they could rely on the international community for their safety, but until the last days of the exodus, I-For remained aloof, describing the crisis as a "civil policing problem".

Later in the year, rival mobs were deployed to prevent refugees from returning

Yes it hurt — but it just didn't work

Commentary John Gray

Can anything be done about growing inequality? The facts are not in doubt. In Britain, the gap between high and low incomes is wider than it has been since late Victorian times. The trend towards greater equality that prevailed until the late 70s has been reversed. Tabloid stories about spectacular fat cats miss the real news, which is that 100-to-one differentials between low-paid workers and their bosses are becoming commonplace. In this, as in most things, we are largely following the United States, where such earnings differentials have nearly quadrupled over the past 20 years. The trolly attendant earning a pittance on our newly privatised trains is a potent symbol of the Americanisation of the British labour market. As we condescend to drift helplessly towards social fragmentation, as market forces drive wage

levels ever farther apart? An influential new-right view suggests that we are. According to this view, which has strong and articulate support in the Cabinet, the new inequalities have arisen from wider opportunities and tougher competition. New technologies and globalised markets have increased the rewards for skills which the market values. At the same time, market deregulation has blown away the pattern of rewards that supported the old class structures. Nowadays, a bond-trader can earn 10 times the salary of a doctor, and 50 times that of a nurse. That is simply supply and demand, working against the background of the skills people have developed. The real root of increased income inequalities is the meritocracy distribution of rewards in markets. Equal opportunities mean unequal outcomes. If we want a meritocratic economy we will have to accept an unequal society. And if cohesion wanes as inequality waxes, that is a trade-off the new right has no problem in accepting.

The bottom line in this view is that a divided society is the price we must pay for a successful and meritocratic economy. How strange, then, that we should have experienced an unprecedented growth in inequality and

social division without reaping any of their supposed economic benefits. In fact the increases in inequality we are seeing have next to nothing to do with wider opportunities. A crucial factor in widening income disparities has been the increased number of workless households. Since 1979 non-pensioner households in which no one is in paid work have multiplied from around 7 per cent to just under 20 per cent. It is this astonishing increase in economic inactivity and dependency that accounts for much of the explosive growth of low incomes. For those in work low pay has many causes, including shake-outs in the wake of privatisation, the rise of short-term contracts and American-style deregulation of the labour market. Underlying all these factors, however, is the deskilling of the British population. This is an unavoidable consequence of unequal access to education. Only one in 20 children with parents in unskilled work does a degree course. Even children with identical qualifications are only half as likely to stay on at school as the children of parents in professional occupations. Four out of five children of unskilled fathers leave school at 16, most with no qualifications of any kind. As poverty has spread, so has exclusion

from educational opportunity. It is not the rise of the meritocracy that explains the growth of inequality, it is the denial of opportunity that comes from being excluded from work and access to education. Today's inequalities come not from meritocracy but its absence.

There is an old-left view which tells us that the solution to today's inequalities is well, more equality. That, roughly, is the view advanced by Roy Hattersley, in his recent exchanges in the Guardian with Gordon Brown. This has the virtue of simplicity in its favour, but little else. It is in fact a mirror-image of the new right. The deep causes of inequality are left undiscovered and untreated. Equality of opportunity is rejected — as if it actually existed in Britain today, and was responsible for growing inequalities (as the new right claims).

Like the new right, which has always denigrated the very idea of social justice, the old left is contemptuous of the sense of fairness that moves ordinary voters. It disregards evidence that voters distinguish sharply between the profits reaped by genuine risk-takers in business and the riches amassed by utility bosses who control the levers of corporate finance. It overlooks the fact that what most people want from government

is that job insecurity is endemic is not only a decent minimum. They want an assurance that if they suffer an economic set-back they will be helped to start afresh. They are as concerned about the provision of opportunities to achieve their aspirations as they are about protection from hardship.

The old-left view passes over many facts of life in the late modern world that make classic egalitarian redistribution a backward-looking remedy for inequality today. Central among these is the fact that Britain is not a country that can in any sense take its wealth for granted. We are not, as perhaps we still were in 1945, a country with a built-in advantage over most others deriving from our long experience of industrialisation. We are a society whose infrastructure of technology and skills has been eroding for decades. To think that inequality can be remedied in our circumstances by policies of egalitarian redistribution is to imagine that Britain is a self-enclosed economy hermetically sealed off from the rest of the world. The reality is that Britain is engaged in a harsh competition for skills and markets, not only with the rest of Europe but with the booming Asian tiger economies. The risk we run if we fall in this competition is deepening relative poverty as a country. Nothing condemns us to carry on drifting hopelessly into wider inequalities and social division. We can reasonably hope for less inequality through more equal opportunities. We cannot hope for any kind of egalitarian ideas from the past. We can expect only a continuing waste of talent and aspiration, dressed up by the new right as economic success.

It is not the rise of meritocracy that explains the growth of inequality, it is the denial of opportunity

Shaggy dog takes taxi to Cotswolds



Richard Boston

JIM is the local taxi-driver who takes me to the station when I have failed to persuade, cajole, bully or blackmail a friend, relative, neighbour or passer-by to give me a lift. Recently he told me the following story. One rainy day he picked up an aged lady in Goring-on-Thames to take her to see her even more aged sister in the Cotswolds. The lady was waiting with her suitcase. Jim opened the door of the car and was a bit surprised when a big wet dog jumped into the back. There had been no mention of a dog, but Jim is a good-natured fellow and said nothing. He stowed her suitcase in the boot and helped the old lady into the back of the car with the dog. And off they went. The dog behaved abominably. It could have been the shaggy dog that stories are told about. It was wet and muddy and bounced about all over the place. Jim could see he would have to put in a bit of work cleaning up afterwards and he thought the old lady could have made some effort to control the hound, but she made only the slightest of remonstrances.

photographic film, short trousers, swimming cozzie. To the bookshop for Greek phrase-book and language tapes. To Blackwell's, Sainsbury's, Marks and Spencers. To the public library to return books and take some out.

To the pet shop to buy flea collars for the cats. To the Museum where there was a fine exhibition of 20th century British art (Nash, Nevinson, Grant, Spencer, etc). This would have taken days in London, whereas it was all done in easy walking distance, and I still had plenty of time for a pleasant pub snack before catching the return bus at 1.30.

Anyway — as narrators say when changing gear — I was in France last week and met my friend Antoine. Antoine is aged 15 and is very good at juggling and always has a story to tell. He said that the other day he went to a restaurant with his mother. At the end of the meal she wished to attract the attention of the waiter in order to pay the bill. To do so she did what is not uncommon in Mediterranean countries. She picked up a piece of cutlery and tapped the wine glass. The wine glass shattered.

On his last but at least the noise succeeded in attracting the waiter's attention. He came over and Antoine's mother apologised. She explained that all she had done was — and, giving a demonstration, shattered another wine glass.

ANTOINE is always full of stories and this was his best, simply because it comes from life and not from that yet-to-be-discovered hell where they invent the "fish which are the one about?" jokes which are the badge of the humourless. I'm afraid to say, though, that Antoine had plenty of those too. They were like Irish jokes. Like the jokes Swedes tell to show the stupidity of Finns, and in New York are told against the Poles. In France they now tell English jokes, and they make the English look very very very very stupid.

The cause is mad cow disease. The French are furious about this. I hope I have only temporarily fallen out with my friend Yves over BSE. For the last year I have found that while in France it is easiest to pretend to be Swedish. If you let on that you are English then you will personally be held responsible for mad cow disease. I told Yves that I was Swedish but he wasn't having any of it. He's known me for more than 10 years and I've never been Swedish before and the *vaches folles* are my fault. The best I could do was to point out that I had never blamed him personally for testing Greek brachmas at Theo Cook's, and been to the bank and got cash from the hole in the wall. Bought some shoes. Bought art materials.

Every story should have a moral, and the moral of this story is that outside London there exist taxi-drivers who are pleasant, helpful, tolerant and good-natured. But it's not just taxi-drivers. Everything is better out of London. I've even come round to Reading, which has improved vastly since the pedestrianisation of the two main streets. From my diary a few months ago I find that a couple of days before going on a surprise trip to Greece I got off the bus in Reading at 10.25.

Within a few minutes I had bought Greek brachmas at Theo Cook's, and been to the bank and got cash from the hole in the wall. Bought some shoes. Bought art materials.



Three colours: black

Julian Berger argues that next month's Bosnian election will harden the ethnic divisions rather than bring together the three factions of the war

WITH less than a month to go before Bosnia votes, the international film crews are beginning to arrive at Sarajevo's newly reopened airport, ready for the world's latest experiment in exotic democracy. But they may all have arrived too late. The most important results of the election have already been decided. The internationally-sponsored vote on September 14 will entrench and legitimise the carve-up of Bosnia, which has continued apace this year despite the presence of 60,000 peacekeeping troops. The rate of ethnic cleansing has actually increased since the war ended. Under the eyes of the Nato-led peace Implementation Force (I-For) terror has been used to shunt civilian populations around the map of Bosnia, and prevent the return of ethnically undesirable refugees.

building exercise, has instead served to sharpen the three-way partition of the country. The various enclaves which muddled the picture, and might have made multi-ethnic forms of government a necessity, have been virtually eliminated.

The elections on September 14 will take place when this new ethnic map has almost been completed. It comes in three detachable sections, Muslim, Croat and Serb. The elections will fix the bright primary colours of the new map and add a veneer by conferring democratic respectability and international recognition on the ethnic cleansers. The veneer on this occasion will be particularly thin and cheap. The elections are being forced through before there is any evidence they will reflect the considered will of the people. Television and radio, particularly in Serb and Croat areas, are shrill megaphones for the ruling nationalist parties, the SDS and HDZ respectively.

Work is under way to set up an internationally-sponsored independent television network at a cost of \$7 million. Even if all goes according to plan it will only be ready a few days before the poll, hardly enough time for independent candidates to try to build a constituency. The SDS, the HDZ and the Muslim Party of Democratic Action (SDA) all have tight control over the police forces in their respective fiefdoms. The police have either stood by while dissidents have been heckled and beaten, or have actively taken part in the harassment. In all three communities, opposition candidates have been bullied out of their jobs. The ugly spectacle is a reminder that the three nationalist parties were all hewn

from the same Yugoslav communist stone.

On one occasion earlier this month, the police in the Serb-held town of Teslic surrounded an opposition candidate in his workplace and besieged him and his supporters until he agreed to resign. The UN police were forced, by their restricted mandate, to stand by and watch. This use of brute force is probably unnecessary. The boss-client relationship between voter and politician has survived from socialism and has even been intensified by the war. This is especially true among Bosnia's two million refugees, whose sense of dependency is near total.

MANY Muslim liberals who would, by political instinct, vote for the opposition presidential candidate, Haris Silajdzic, have decided to back the SDA incumbent, Alija Izetbegovic. Their fear is that a split Muslim vote will hand the chairmanship of Bosnia's joint presidency to the Serb master ethnic-cleanser, Momcilo Krajisnik. This would surely be the supreme irony of the "transition to democracy" — a man who has spent the war trying to destroy Bosnia would emerge as its head of state. Any doubts over the nationalists' complete control of their electorates were dispelled by the June local elections in Mostar. The SDA and the HDZ swept through. A competing mixed list of candidates from both Muslim and Croat communities won only 3 per cent of the vote.

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Geoffrey Dearmer

Last echo of war

At Serbia when a sickening curse of sound came hurrying from the shrapnel-shaken skies...

THUS Geoffrey Dearmer, who has died aged 103, referred to his younger brother, killed only days before his own landing at Gallipoli...

For many years, he was the last surviving war poet of the 1914-18 conflict, whose work was acclaimed by critics on both sides of the Atlantic...

the title of A Pilgrim's Song, by John Murray, to wide, enthusiastic and unexpected publicity.

A Prayer, II

Lord, when I stand in Thy celestial court And render thee a poet's last report; From my worn, working body, dearly prized, Discharged, or, at the best, demobilised;

teaching jobs in India and Britain, before settling down to a dual occupation. His principal employment was with the BBC, beginning in the early 1930s, and culminating from 1939 in 20 years as virtual editor of Children's Hour.

He knew Bernard Shaw, Robert Graves, Rudyard Kipling, John Massfield and others who achieved the fame he dodged. Belatedly, at the age of 100, a degree of that notoriety, with full recognition of his standing as poet, came upon him uninvited.



Geoffrey Dearmer... the last surviving 1914-18 war poet, his works were forgotten for 70 years

GRAHAM TURNER

day of Dearmer's century. It says something for his versatility that one poem for children, The Blue Whale, was set to music and performed worldwide by Eogay Carmichael.

Of Owen, Sassoon and other long-established first world war poets, Dearmer saw more active service than most of those contemporaries, both at Gallipoli and on the Western Front.

bloodied mud of the battlefields swirling round his boots. Here is one expression of his unquenchable optimism, written amid all the sordid nastiness.

entirely Their clinging arms; across the placard bloom A quiet-breathing rose. Geoffrey Dearmer is survived by his daughter, the Rev Juliet Woolcombe, his granddaughter, and two half-sisters.

Rabbi Hugo Gryn

Wise guide in the Moral Maze



Hugo Gryn... rabbi, broadcaster and Auschwitz survivor. His greeting was always: 'Tell me nice things.'

RABBI Hugo Gryn, who has died aged 66, became a national figure thanks to the radio. On BBC Radio 4's The Moral Maze, of which he was the undoubted star, he got to grips with problems ranging from multiple birth to prison sentences and put them into a new perspective.

spoke on the radio about Judaism, it was always from a strictly traditional viewpoint. He was also a poet, a writer in Hebrew and Yiddish (he spoke eight languages) — he also possessed a wisdom and modesty given to very few.

Russia, then under German domination, and is now in Ukraine. His father was in the forestry business and his mother a doctor. It was an idyllic childhood, with frequent visits to his grandparents in a nearby town.

It was called Anuschwitz." Soon he, his father and young brother would make that journey themselves. His brother and grandparents were gassed on arrival.

ing was the clue to Hugo. He was a man of high academic achievements and training, in rabbinical studies and philosophy, but he was above all a man of feeling.

Birthdays Gerry Birmingham, Labour MP, 56; Reginald Bevins, former Conservative minister, 88; Prof Sir John Boardman, archaeologist, 69; John Emburey, cricketer, 44; Laurent Fabius, former prime minister of France, 50; Roger Gale, Conservative MP, 53; James Gardie, chief commissioner, 60; Gus Macdonald, managing director, Scottish Television, 56; Tom Mangold, broadcaster, 62; Slobodan Milosevic, president of Serbia, 55; George Mitchell, Irish peace negotiator, 54; Dr Helen Muir, FRCS, dermatologist, 76; Robert Plant, rock singer, 48; Prof Sir John Plumb, historian, 85; Robin Oakley, BBC political editor, 55; Prof Anthony Seaton, chairman, DoE Environment Air Pollution Commission, 53; Yvette Swan, president, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, 51; Bob Wareing, Labour MP, 61.

Letter

Greta Shewon writes: Geoff Hamilton's untimely death (obituary, August 5) will change Friday evenings for many thousands of gardeners.

James McLamore

An empire built on the Whopper

JAMES McLamore, who has died aged 70, was the creator of the Whopper, and co-founder of the Burger King chain of fast-food restaurants.

whose engine of expansion was the franchise system. It meant the McDonalds rented out the know-how, trademark and marketing skills (and, in their case, the property) and the amount of the work.

only to McDonalds, operating throughout north America and abroad. If Burger King can be distinguished from its clones, it would be its greater insistence on the hamburger as core product (and its particular machine for cooking it), resisting for much longer the proliferation of fish, pancakes, chicken and ribs pursued by its competitors.

ore to pass over the charcoal grill for the required time. When cooked, they drop from their gates into small chutes towards the sandwiching node, whence they move to the preparation table where humans add the condiments. It successfully excluded skill and discretion from the cooking process.

and was later chairman of the University of Miami board of trustees for 10 years, and helped raise more than \$619 million. In 1990, the University of Miami made McLamore an honorary doctor of humanity.

Howard Johnson's pre-war experience, proliferated, offering trouble-free environments and family-friendly food ("aimed at the six-year-old palate" moaned arch-goldmeister James Beard) in the new zones of human occupation, suburban malls and interstates. By reducing the labour content of their enterprise to so little — Burger King's broiling machine cost \$30,000, but its unskilled operator was a teenager at below average wages who lasted four months in the job — the pioneers made fortunes.

Deaths Notices BLACKBURN, Dorothy, Frances, died 1940, aged 100 years, 15th August 1996. A daughter of Mrs. M. E. Blackburn, and much loved daughter of Peter (deceased) and Joan (deceased) Blackburn. Buried at St. Mary's Church, Blackburn. Flowers to 21 Westley Terrace, Manchester, W14 8JH. Tel: 0161 275 2196. In care of Mrs. M. E. Blackburn, 10th Westley Terrace, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 1JH. Tel: 0161 275 2196.

Jackdaw



Plastic mac life

ROGER has been a trainspotter all his life, and maps his whole history by the changing liveries, or the dull tints of an old steam engine door, now replaced by the silent glide of modern electronic ones.

The real trainspotters, however, are in Focuss. Tomorrow in Jackdaw, bird-watchers and star-gazers — more living legends of the amateur.

Ferret freedom

AS OF today, Massachusetts is no longer immune to the discreet charm of the domestic ferret. For sixty years, we have treated these creatures as if they were owls, and while ferrets may wear masks that make them look like bandits, the consensus is that they are, for the most part, law-abiding, litter-box-using types. Still, we've not only made it illegal for people to harbour them, we've even threatened to 'pauk vets' licences if they so much as give a ferret a rabies shot. This is a typical big-government move, endangering public health in the process of protecting it. Yet the ferrets are still with us — by some counts, there are 50,000 such fugitives in the state — and our meddling has done nothing but left them vulnerable to rabies. With this law, ferret owners will finally be able to step out of the shadows.

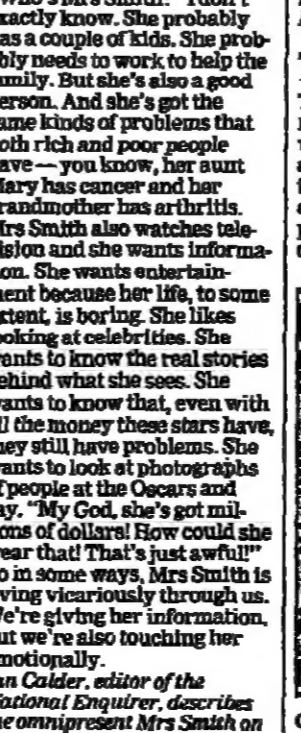
Now, if you were to ask me, 'Who's Mrs Smith?' I don't exactly know. She probably has a couple of kids. She's probably needs to work to help the family. But she's also a good person. And she's got the same kinds of problems that both rich and poor people have — you know, her aunt Mary has cancer and her grandmother has arthritis.

whom the success of the mag relies. Interviewed by John Kennedy in George.

Top dogs

TODAY dogs are icons, viable medallions that proclaim who we are or aspire to be. But dogs are often chosen for their history, their looks or their associations, not their true personalities. My veterinary clinic is in the heart of London.

George



but what breed am I seeing more frequently than ever before? Border Collies! Freedom-loving, hock-nipping, obsessive-compulsive, pin-eyed, sleep-barcoding farm dogs.

be a lark. Life is licking faces, not easy to train as easily distracted.

Emily Sheffield

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom of the page.

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Finance Guardian

Health signal... Dr Johnson (right) offers Mr Kivumri a diagnosis on platform one
PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

Doctor's surgery takes the strain at Victoria station

Ian King and Vivak Chaudhary

THE 200,000 commuters who suffer daily stress at London's Victoria Station were offered relief yesterday in the form of Britain's first walk-in doctor's surgery at a station.



station-based Medicentre before Christmas and dozens more could appear later in Britain's stations and airports.

service is not cheap, although Kate Bleasdale, chief executive of Sinclair Montrose, insisted the price was in line with the market rate for private health practices.

Following the flotation in June of Sinclair Montrose - formed from the merger of her business with that of chairman Michael Sinclair - she now owns a stake worth more than £2.5 million.

reflexes and his shoulder before advising his patient that he needed an X-ray. He told Mr Kivumri he had damaged his shoulder muscles, was suffering from a condition known as a rotated cuff injury and would need to make a return visit.

hardly ever get any time to go and see my GP so I came here because it's where I work and my manager told me to come here.

Shoemaker feels pinch

As Chamberlain Phipps goes into administration, Pauline Springett reports on the fall-out



Sullivan... 20p stake

THE shoe industry was plunged deeper into gloom yesterday when the British operation of struggling shoe manufacturer Chamberlain Phipps, went into administrative receivership with debts of about £30 million.

After the second profits warning in May, when it predicted it would show a loss for the year to the end of March 1996 and that it would not pay a final dividend, Chamberlain's day-in-day running was taken over by company doctor Archie Poulson, who became acting chief executive.

It was taken to the stock market by the American venture capitalist Dan Sullivan, who now has a 26 per cent stake in the company. Mr Sullivan received a bonus of £298,000 for his work on the flotation. That was part of a remuneration package of £601,000 he received for 1995.

UK shoe manufacturers are blaming their difficulties on increased competition from overseas rivals who have much lower costs. Three-quarters of all footwear in the UK is imported and experts expect that proportion to rise.

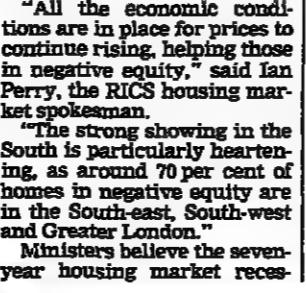
House price slide 'is over'

Back from the depths



Net balance of estate agents reporting changes in house prices, %

What estate agents are saying: % balance reporting rise in house prices on previous quarter



London 1
South East 2
South West 3
East Anglia 4
Yorkshire & Humbers 5
West Midlands 6
East Midlands 7
North West 8
North 9
Wales 10

Source: Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors

Tories receive southern comfort from claim that negative equity is fading fast, says LARRY ELLIOTT

GOVERNMENT hopes of recovering lost support in the key marginal seats of southern England are boosted today by a report from estate agents which concludes that rising prices are rapidly eating into negative equity.

and in particular the million or so borrowers with homes worth less than the outstanding mortgage - was a key factor behind the ebbing of Conservative support.

Brazil first with male Pill

Chris Mihill Medical Correspondent

THE battle to make a safe and effective "male Pill" was stepped up yesterday when a Brazilian pharmaceutical company said it would begin the world's first production of an approved contraceptive next year.

Africa and Asia and has secured World Health Organization approval, he said.

use as a male contraceptive appeared in 1978, but Chinese health officials warned in the 1980s that cooking with crude cotton-seed oil could lead to male infertility.

Sparks fly on competition

Chris Barrie

THE Government and the electricity industry were on collision course last night, when it emerged that many regional electricity companies want to delay the introduction of competition in household supply.

Competition is due to start on April 1 1998, and Offer states that it remains committed to allowing every household to choose its supplier from the start day. But a spokeswoman said it was to consider the case for phasing in competition.

The Government said its position remained that competition would start from the scheduled date.

Notebook

Proof positive of property pick-up



Edited by Mark Milner

LET'S face it, estate agents could hardly be described as the most reliable commentators on the UK economy. Over the past seven years they have been guilty of spotting more false dawns than the England cricket selectors.

events. The US Federal Reserve's open market committee, which meets today, and Thursday's meeting of the German Bundesbank's central council.

Confidence vote

PENSION funds have long been blamed for the poor performance of British industry because of their hands-off, short-term approach to investment.

That may be changing, but not all for the better.

One expert returning to Britain said that a noticeable difference from his last visit was the number of office windows unblinded with special offers for champagne.

But the good news is that Cadbury, Greenbury and the rest seem to be having some effect. It is only a small change, but the trend which has seen pension funds delegating voting powers has been reversed.

Bundesbank bets

THESE are dog days in the financial markets. Business is somewhere between slow and becalmed.

At the beginning of the 1990s, more than one in five pension funds took responsibility for voting its shares at company meetings.

EMI opens on a high note

Lisa Buckingham

INVESTORS' love affair with prospects for the EMI music group ensured that its shares rushed up 50p to 1,460p at the end of its first day's trading as a separately quoted company.

Thorn, which largely comprises the rental businesses such as Rent-A-Center in the US and Radio Rentals in Britain, did see its shares reach 409p at one stage.

TOURIST RATES - BANK SELLS

Australia 1,905.00	France 7.64	Italy 2,304	Singapore 2.19
Austria 15.75	Germany 2.24	Malta 0.5360	South Africa 6.84
Belgium 46.09	Greece 360.00	Netherlands 2,515.00	Spain 169.00
Canada 2,078	Hong Kong 11.67	New Zealand 2,182.5	Sweden 10.10
Cyprus 0.9620	India 55.11	Norway 5.72	Switzerland 1,169.00
Denmark 8.70	Ireland 0.9350	Portugal 230.50	Turkey 327.00
Finland 6.86	Israel 4.86	Saudi Arabia 5,775	USA 1.5125

12 FINANCE AND ECONOMICS

Steelworks heritage meets silicon future

PATCHWORK PROGRESS/The Scottish economy is strong but still vulnerable, writes John Arlidge

ONE by one the symbols of the past have fallen. Clydeside cranes are now heritage sites, Ravenscraig's last-rod ore chutes and grey cooling towers were blown up. With no steelworks, the country which once launched the ships which won an empire is now officially post-industrial.

When Ravenscraig ran down, the last mines closed and bitter industrial disputes forced companies like Times and Ford to abandon new investment, many economists predicted a grim future up north.

To many, Scotland is still a land where the dole queues stretch ever-longer with drug-fuelled, no-hopers — the "train-spotting" generation.

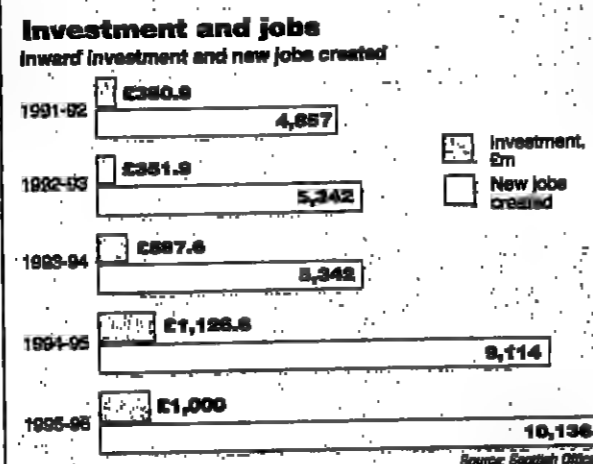
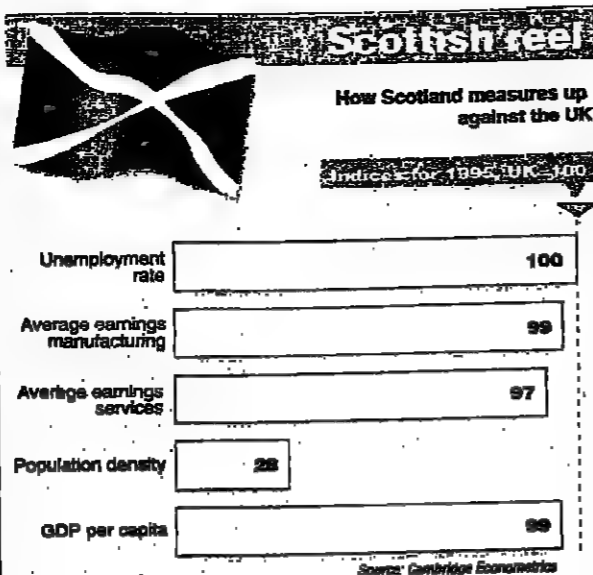
True, many parts of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Lanarkshire and Fife still suffer the effects of economic decline. But recently, in a typically understated way, the said country has begun to fight back, generating a unique Caedonian recovery.

Forward-looking partnerships between the public and private sector have transformed Scotland's economic base. Computers, cash machines, mobile phones, call centres and financial services firms have become the dynamic new face of Scotland's economy. Names like NEC, Motorola, Compaq and Direct Line have replaced the "Craig".

Much of this new growth has come from the US and the Pacific Rim. Attracted by generous grants, the Far East and Silicon Valley have created Silicon Glen, the hi-tech corridor that runs from Ayr to Aberdeen.

Last year, Locata in Scotland, the Government's inward investment agency, attracted a record £1 billion of new projects, creating over 12,500 jobs.

Drive across Scotland from Edinburgh to Glasgow these days and you cannot miss the new wealth: on your right, at Livingston, the new £500 million NEC semi-conductor factory and on your left, near Motherwell, the \$500 million Chunghwa/Lite-On complex



which will make screens for one-third of the TVs and computers sold in Europe.

Overall, 50,000 Scots now produce 95 per cent of Europe's personal computers and 21 per cent of the continent's integrated circuits.

There are, of course, doubts about the long-term future of the burgeoning electronics sector. With almost half of the firms in foreign hands, observers point out how a sudden slump in world markets could precipitate an exit every bit as sharp as the recent arrivals.

Long-term success depends on local growth around the overseas branch-plants. But here the record is less encouraging. The business birth-rates remains depressingly low, something which worries Professor Brian Ashcroft, director of the Fraser of Allander Institute, Scotland's leading economic forecaster.

"There is a lot of good news in the Scottish economy. Last year we outperformed the rest of the UK and unemployment remains low. But most of the growth has come in the electronics sector and services sector, while indigenous manufacturing is performing poorly. In aggregate terms, the picture is good, but there are underlying difficulties."

If new companies are struggling, Professor Ashcroft can draw comfort from the success of established firms. In recent years, Scottish business has begun to flex its muscles to protect its interests at home and expand south of the border.

Stagecoach, the Perth-based bus company, has grown rapidly to control 15 per cent of the UK market, while Scottish Power has taken over Manweb, the Chester-based electricity distribution company, and Southern Water.

Forth Ports has swallowed up Tilbury Docks and Scottish and Newcastle has taken over Courage, to become Scotland's biggest company. With British Energy selling off the UK's nuclear industry from its new headquarters in Edinburgh, Scotland's "blue chip" companies are in rude health. And, as it prepares for a £10 billion expansion in Atlantic waters, the oil industry is buoyant.

With so much activity, it is hardly surprising that the latest forecast from Business Strategies, the London-based consultancy, shows that Scotland's economy is set to motor strongly next year, with GDP growth moving up from an estimated 2.1 per cent in 1996 to 3.2 per cent in 1997.

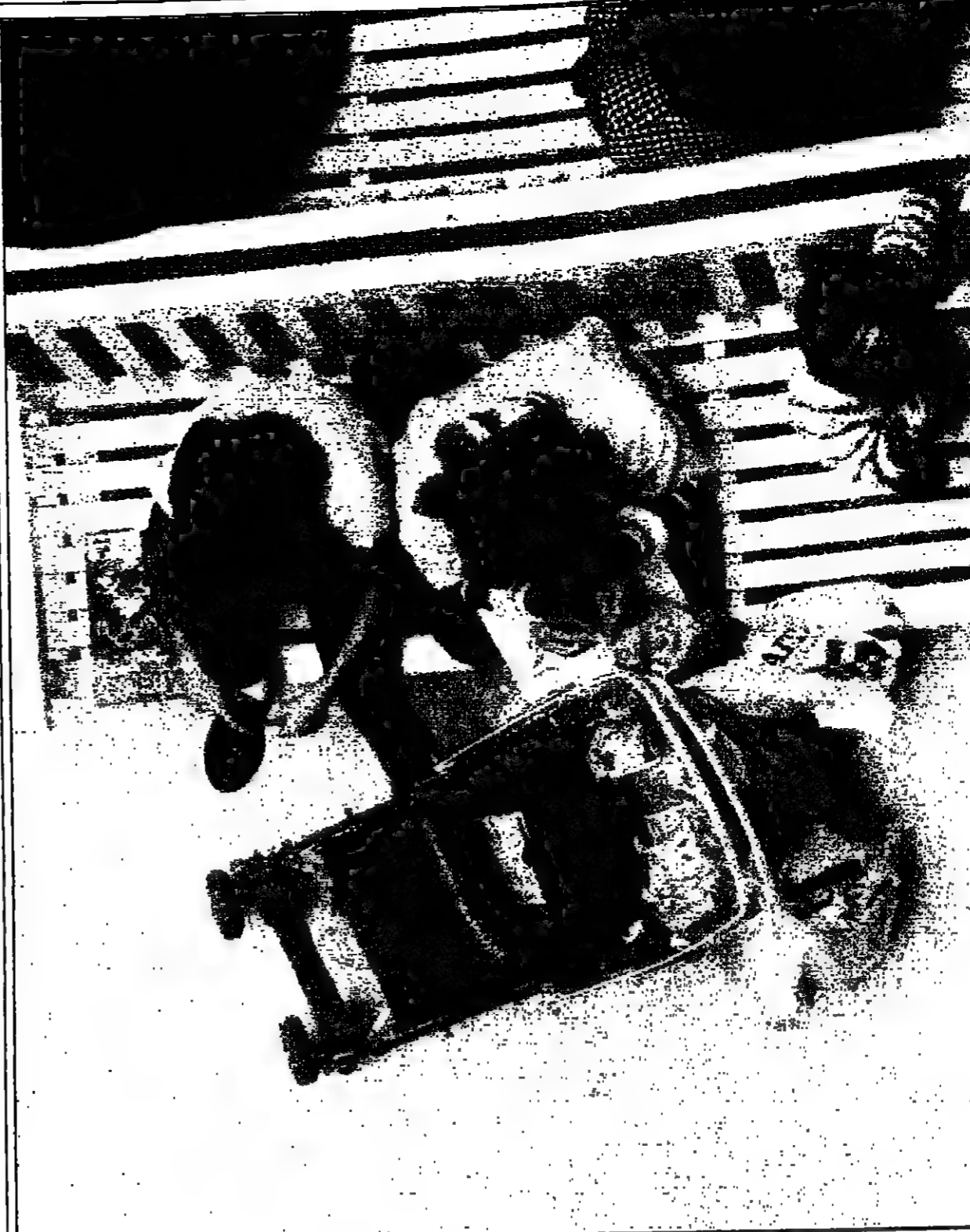
Could Scotland's recovery be blown off course? In the short term, the answer is no. But looming constitutional change has made the economy a political issue, raising concerns for the future.

Under the abrasive, combative Scottish Secretary, Michael Forsyth, the Tories warn that companies will relocate south of the border if Labour uses its proposed Scottish parliament to impose a "tartan tax".

So far, however, the fears seem exaggerated but political instability could prove damaging.

More important is Scotland's generous financial settlement. Scotland has a structural fiscal deficit. Under a long-established spending formula, the country enjoys 10.66 per cent of UK revenue, even though it only has 8.8 per cent of the population.

Mr Forsyth, who strongly defends the formula, insists that it would not survive devolution. If Scotland has its own revenue-raising assembly, he insists, the English will ask the Scots to pay their own way. In recent years, the Scottish economy has been doing just that.



Spending sweetener... Lakeside in Thurrock is offering shoppers a combined Visa and loyalty card PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

More shoppers get credit for loyalty

LAKESIDE Shopping Centre in Thurrock and American Airlines yesterday joined the growing number of businesses offering combined payment and loyalty schemes.

Lakeside has teamed up with Midland Bank to offer a Visa card which embraces the centre's existing loyalty scheme, while American has launched a Royal Bank of Scotland MasterCard which clocks up points in the airline's AAdvantage frequent flyer programme.

Such affinity or co-branded cards grew originally through liaisons with charities but the credit card companies, eager to build cardholder bases, have expanded the notion into the commercial sector, especially with retailers.

The supermarket chain Budgens launched a Visa card last year, while earlier in the summer Tesco added a payment card option to its loyalty scheme.

Lakeside is believed to be the first shopping centre in Europe or North America to expand the concept beyond individual retailers, although towns threatened by such shopping centres are also considering the idea.

A spokeswoman for Lakeside said the deal with Midland Bank would automate the existing loyalty scheme, which gives shoppers bonus points for every £1 they spend in the shopping centre, but requires them to get receipts validated at a customer service point. "This will save customer's legwork," she said.

Shoppers will continue to receive bonus points at the rate of 1 for every £10 spent, entitling them to various prizes. The card operates like a normal Visa card, but there is no annual fee.

While the Lakeside card clocks up bonus points only on spending at the shopping centre, holders of the American Airlines MasterCard gain frequent flyer points on all spending with the card.

One AAdvantage mile will be earned for every £2 spent with the card. The miles can be added to others earned on flights with American and other participating airlines, as well as other AAdvantage scheme members. Miles can also be redeemed against flights with other carriers.

The card has an annual fee of £36 and an introductory interest rate of 14.6 per cent for the first year.

Argos extends its catalogue of successes to Holland

CATALOGUE chain Argos is heading for Holland in an attempt to maintain its dramatic growth, which has continued in the first six months of the year with a rise in profits of almost a half.

Chief executive Mike Smith said yesterday that the company's low prices had been the main factor but growing consumer confidence had helped to push up sales by almost a fifth to £561 million. Pre-tax profit for the first half of the year rose from £22 million to £32 million.

Looking to the long term, when British growth will become more difficult, Argos has completed a study of continental Europe which identified Holland as the most promising opportunity.

In typically cautious Argos fashion, the first stores will not open until 1998 and the initial target is only five shops. But, if the trial is successful, Argos estimates that it can build a chain of 70 Dutch stores.

"Holland is the country which has been most successful for UK retailers," Mr Smith said. "It is closest culturally and in the range we can offer."

He said the markets in France and Spain were dominated by hypermarkets, while the attractions of Germany were offset by tight controls and a highly concentrated retail industry.

But Mr Smith stressed the long-term nature of the Dutch venture, predicting that it was unlikely to make a profit for four or five years.

About 40 per cent of the 5,000 lines in the Dutch catalogue will be unique to Holland. That will aid costs in buying and in producing the catalogues, in addition to extra distribution expense.

The company also continues to expand in Britain. It expects to open 39 stores this year, record numbers. That will take the chain beyond 400 shops, with an ultimate target of well over 600.

The new stores will include seven Call and Collect outlets, expanding the limited trial which started last year and takes the catalogue format into smaller locations.

Unlike normal Argos stores, these small shops do not carry stock. Customers can order goods in the shop or by telephone, and deliveries are made from the nearest ordinary store.

Argos also continues to develop its home-delivery operation, where sales in the first half of the year grew by 41 per cent to £40 million. The incentive and promotion business, now called Argos Business Solutions, also grew strongly, with sales up from £31 million to £39 million.

Mr Smith pledged to maintain the group's low-price stance, saying he would not raise prices even if he felt the market made it possible. Items carried over from last year's catalogue were 0.1 per cent cheaper in the first half, while the reduction will be 1 per cent in the second half of the year.

Despite pricing pressure, the profit margin grew, although some of that increase was due to special factors.

Investors were delighted with the company's performance, especially a 32 per cent increase in the interim dividend. The share price rose by 14p to 757p.

News in brief

Rebel Names scrap Lloyd's challenge

A GROUP of rebel UK Names decided yesterday to abandon plans for a Court of Appeal challenge to the reconstruction plan of Lloyd's of London. The 1,275-strong Paying Names Action Group (FNAG) said it had been unable to guarantee an extra £100,000 to finance a continued legal battle.

Last week the High Court rejected FNAG's allegation that the Lloyd's rescue plan was unfair. FNAG's chairman, Tony Welford, said the action group would now consider its options.

Lloyd's 34,000 Names have until 28 August to reject or accept its £2.2 billion rescue deal. Lloyd's is also fighting an 11th-hour challenge in Virginia by 100 American Names who claim the deal violates US securities laws. The case, which started yesterday, is expected to last several days. — Pauline Springer

Telecom patents soar

APPLICATIONS for telecommunication patents last year overtook those for mechanical engineering for the first time, reflecting explosive growth in the communications industry. The Patents Office reported yesterday that the number of telecom patent applications published rose 7 per cent to 619 during 1995, making telecoms "the most dynamic area of patent activity".

The South Korean industrial group Samsung, which is investing £450 million in an electronics plant in the North-east, was granted 221 UK patents last year, far more than any other company. Foreign companies dominated the new patent rankings, with the best British companies, Marconi and British Telecom, in seventh and eighth positions. However, most of Britain's most successful work-beating companies are in the pharmaceutical industry, which tends to seek European patents covering Britain. — Nicholas Barnister

M&S bills clients twice

A COMPUTER error at the financial services centre of Marks & Spencer, the high street retailer, resulted in more than 40,000 customers being billed twice for the same amount. About 41,000 customers with loan accounts were debited on consecutive days this month.

A spokeswoman said the company would ensure that anyone who incurred bank charges because of the error received compensation, but she declined to comment on how much the mistake would cost. She said M&S had repaid the money and had sent out letters of explanation. "It was a computer error and we do apologise to our customers," she said. — PA

Medeva wins US licence

MEDEVA said that United States authorities had granted it a licence for a new asthma inhaler that does not use chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). Medeva, Britain's fourth-largest drugmaker, said the Food and Drug Administration approved its "metered dose inhaler" for patients using salbutamol. — Bloomberg

Price Waterhouse

THE settlement of litigation by Price Waterhouse, administrators of Maxwell Communication Corporation, against the US accountants Coopers & Lybrand was for \$68 million, not \$88 million as we reported on Saturday.

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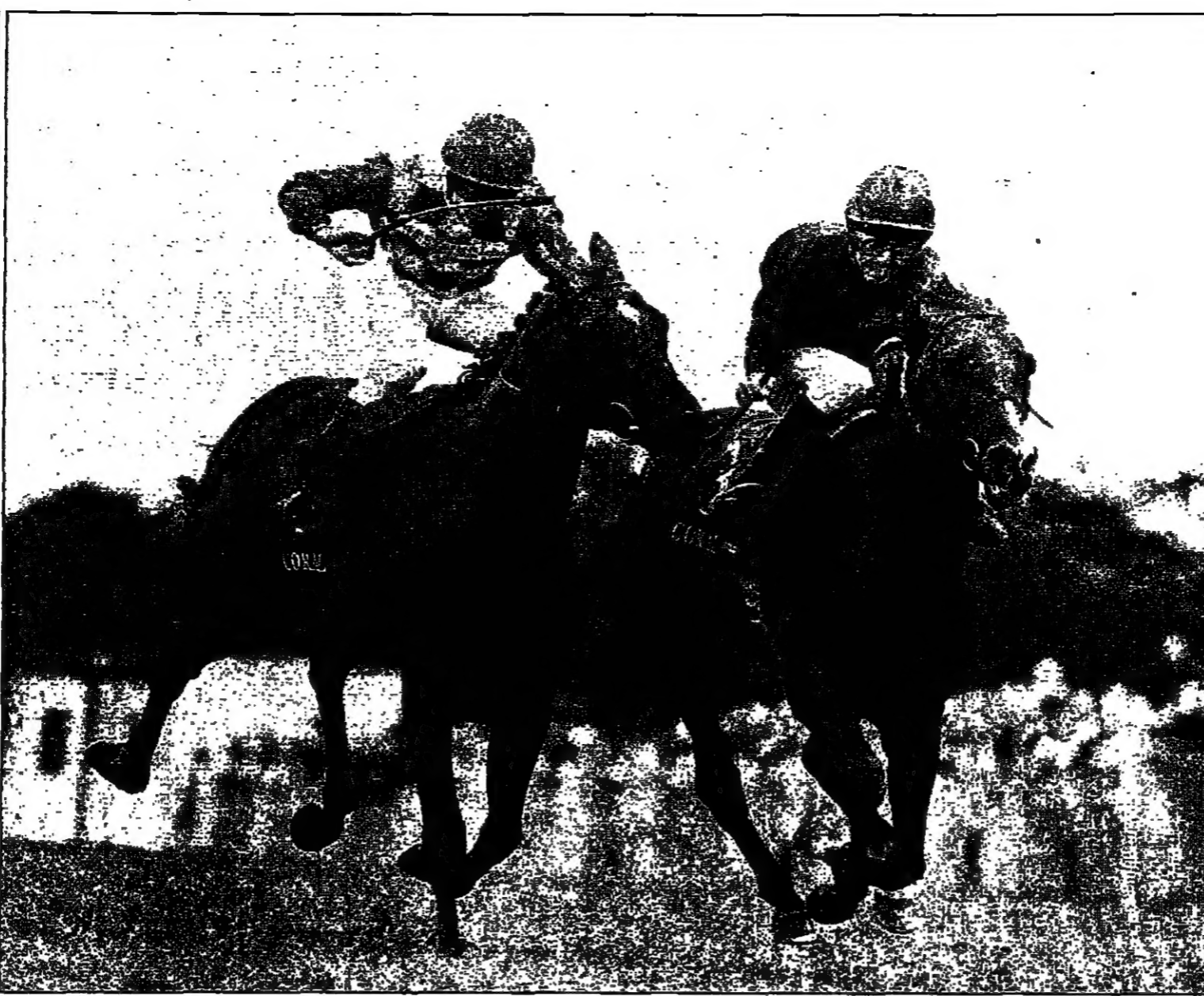
مكتبة ابن الجوزي

Racing

Ron Cox previews the first day of the York meeting and expects last year's big winner to complete a unique double

Halling to eclipse International rivals

EVER since Roberto stopped Brigadier Gerard in his tracks in the first running of the Juddmonte International Stakes, known then as the Benson & Hedges Gold Cup, back in 1973, there has been a special fascination with this Group One event which dominates the first of three days' top class racing at York.



Return match... Halling (right) and Bijou d'Inde, first and second at Sandown last month, meet again at York today

He would not be the first dual winner, Dahlia and Ebor had beaten him to that, but Halling is out to become the first horse to win both the Eclipse Stakes and International in successive seasons. Despite a superb wins-to-runs ratio, he has won 11 of his last 13 races.

Michael Hills may have the last laugh on First Island. Geoff Wragg's colt has the clear advantage after finishing third to Santillana at Sandown in April. He looks sure to come on for his latest run, but it is hard to know what to make of Dushyantor.

behind St Maves in the Gordon Stakes. Luca Cumani's colt had been sidelined with sore shins after finishing third to Santillana at Sandown in April. He looks sure to come on for his latest run, but it is hard to know what to make of Dushyantor.

Carson booked to ride Ambassador in the Ebor

AMBASSADOR will take his chance in tomorrow's Tote Ebor Handicap at York. Doubts had been expressed about Barry Hills' colt running but yesterday a spokeswoman for the stable said: "The plan is to run Ambassador in the Ebor and Willie Carson rides."

good but we will not be watering again due to the threat of rain. Lady Harries, who trains Harbour Dues, received a big-rose boost at Windsor yesterday with Maralinga. Her four-year-old made all the running in the BAA Bonusprint Frequent Buyer Stakes under a confident ride by Declan O'Shea.

about right in the final six furlongs, it is still firm in the back straight. "I will speak to Lord Westminster but much depends on the weather. If it is cool and overcast on Wednesday it may be the ground is good but if we were to have a hot day then there could be problems."

York card with guide to the form

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Time. Includes races like 2.05 Inverness, 2.35 Hallowing, 2.45 Double Splendor, 2.55 Hallowing, 3.10 Hallowing, 3.25 Hallowing, 3.40 Hallowing, 3.55 Hallowing, 4.10 Hallowing, 4.25 Hallowing, 4.40 Hallowing, 4.55 Hallowing, 5.10 Hallowing, 5.25 Hallowing, 5.40 Hallowing, 5.55 Hallowing, 6.10 Hallowing, 6.25 Hallowing, 6.40 Hallowing, 6.55 Hallowing, 7.10 Hallowing, 7.25 Hallowing, 7.40 Hallowing, 7.55 Hallowing, 8.10 Hallowing, 8.25 Hallowing, 8.40 Hallowing, 8.55 Hallowing, 9.10 Hallowing, 9.25 Hallowing, 9.40 Hallowing, 9.55 Hallowing, 10.10 Hallowing, 10.25 Hallowing, 10.40 Hallowing, 10.55 Hallowing, 11.10 Hallowing, 11.25 Hallowing, 11.40 Hallowing, 11.55 Hallowing, 12.10 Hallowing, 12.25 Hallowing, 12.40 Hallowing, 12.55 Hallowing.

Channel 4

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WINDSOR

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Paralympics

Three golds for Britain on the track

Richard Redden in Atlanta

WORLD records continued to tumble in Atlanta as Britain gained their first gold medals on the track. David Holding, a 38-year-old from Kettering, twice broke the 100 metres record in the semi-finals and final of the T53 class for wheelchair competitors, winning his gold medal in 14.49sec.

Tennis

Sampras serves up his fifth final victory of season

PETE SAMPRAS maintained his record of winning every final he has appeared in this year when he beat Goran Ivanisevic 7-6, 7-5 to win the RCA Championship in Indianapolis.

Folkestone

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Time. Includes races like 2.00 Folkestone, 2.10 Folkestone, 2.20 Folkestone, 2.30 Folkestone, 2.40 Folkestone, 2.50 Folkestone, 3.00 Folkestone, 3.10 Folkestone, 3.20 Folkestone, 3.30 Folkestone, 3.40 Folkestone, 3.50 Folkestone, 4.00 Folkestone, 4.10 Folkestone, 4.20 Folkestone, 4.30 Folkestone, 4.40 Folkestone, 4.50 Folkestone, 5.00 Folkestone, 5.10 Folkestone, 5.20 Folkestone, 5.30 Folkestone, 5.40 Folkestone, 5.50 Folkestone, 6.00 Folkestone, 6.10 Folkestone, 6.20 Folkestone, 6.30 Folkestone, 6.40 Folkestone, 6.50 Folkestone, 7.00 Folkestone, 7.10 Folkestone, 7.20 Folkestone, 7.30 Folkestone, 7.40 Folkestone, 7.50 Folkestone, 8.00 Folkestone, 8.10 Folkestone, 8.20 Folkestone, 8.30 Folkestone, 8.40 Folkestone, 8.50 Folkestone, 9.00 Folkestone, 9.10 Folkestone, 9.20 Folkestone, 9.30 Folkestone, 9.40 Folkestone, 9.50 Folkestone, 10.00 Folkestone, 10.10 Folkestone, 10.20 Folkestone, 10.30 Folkestone, 10.40 Folkestone, 10.50 Folkestone, 11.00 Folkestone, 11.10 Folkestone, 11.20 Folkestone, 11.30 Folkestone, 11.40 Folkestone, 11.50 Folkestone, 12.00 Folkestone, 12.10 Folkestone, 12.20 Folkestone, 12.30 Folkestone, 12.40 Folkestone, 12.50 Folkestone.

Soccer

Hoddle sets sail on tide of optimism

David Lacey says Thursday's England squad must build on legacy of Venables

GLENN HODDLE will announce his first England squad on Thursday. Ten days later, in Moldova, he will begin the task of ensuring that England are among the 32 nations who will contest the 1998 World Cup in France.

Hoddle needs time, of which he has precious little, and luck in abundant quantities. At least the country is in a buoyant mood, but that can change with the wind.

The apparently seamless transfer of power from Venables to Hoddle, who took over with every sign of wanting to continue to play the same way, did nothing to dispel the new sense of well-being.

Clearly Hoddle wants friendly games around him. He already has John Gorman, an old buddy at Tottenham and Swindon, as his No. 2. He also wanted Arsène Wenger, his

coach at Monaco, to be the Football Association's technical director, at least Wenger's advice will now be rather costly to hand than Japan.

The European Championship reminded the nation that England's footballers are not so far behind the world's best in terms of technique as is sometimes imagined.

Looked at coldly and statistically, the results England achieved at Wembley in Euro 96 in open play — two wins and three draws — would not, if repeated at home, do a lot for their chances of reaching France in 1998.

Whether he likes it or not, Hoddle will shortly be setting the tone for the season. The Champions' League begins 10 days after the Moldova game.

Initially much will rest on the players' ability to retain the spirit of their Euro 96 performances. Maybe this is why, with Tony Adams recovering from another knee operation, Hoddle felt he needed the passion of Pearce.

Since winning the World Cup in 1966 England have won only two bronze medals in 30 years of international tournaments. But English clubs have still won more prizes than any other country, and now is the time to rediscover the threads of success.

A succession of Premiership champions have failed to make an impact in the Champions' League. UEFA's abandonment of restrictions on foreign players, post-Bosman, has improved Manchester United's chances of making a better fist of it this time.

Yet United are not England, and it is on Hoddle's first few results that the true legacy of Euro 96 will be judged. If the championship turns out to have been nothing more than a vehicle for a fresh wave of foreign signings by English clubs, then it might as well have died intestate.

Rush split with Wales looks final

Martin Thorpe

AN RUSH'S Wales career is almost certainly over after a falling-out with the manager Bobby Gould. The Leeds striker's disenchantment became public yesterday when he refused to join the squad for the World Cup qualifier with San Marino a week on Saturday.

Rush, angry at being told he will not be in the starting line-up for the game in Cardiff and has refused to travel as a reserve.

When Gould took over as manager last August he immediately installed Rush as one of his coaches, but it is understood the player has slowly become disillusioned.

Wales and improve his fitness. But he was substituted in the 3-0 defeat after an hour and as he left the pitch aimed a verbal volley at the coach.

Gould, who partly feels that Rush's best days are behind him anyway, defended his decision not to guarantee him a place by saying: "Mark Hughes and Dean Saunders were highly effective in the win in San Marino and those who played then will get their chance again."

That 5-0 victory signals well for Wales in Cardiff, especially as they have Everton's Gary Speed back after he missed the first game because he was on honeymoon.

Barry Town's Dean Hughes, called up to the Under-21 party, becomes the first League of Wales player to be selected for a Welsh national squad.

Hateley joins Leeds on loan

HOWARD WILKINSON is set to field a veteran striking partnership tonight, after taking the former England international Mark Hateley from Queens Park Rangers on a month's loan.

The Leeds manager moved for the 34-year-old Hateley after learning that Brian Deane might be out for three weeks with a groin injury.



Ground breakers... Dallaglio of Wasps and QPR's Sinclair represent different spheres of influence

Wasps happy with new nest

Jeremy Alexander at Loftus Road hears about the benefits of an unlikely union

WASPS will play 12 games at Loftus Road this season. Like Queens Park Rangers, they reside now under the umbrella company Loftus Road plc, which owns 100 per cent of both.

The union, announced on August 1, enjoyed its public ceremonial yesterday, when Lawrence Dallaglio, his apparent to the England captaincy, looked more at ease juggling a soccer ball than Trevor Sinclair holding a rugby one.

Chris Wright, a music and sports entrepreneur, has bought both clubs for £2 million less than Shearer's price. They will operate independently according to separate budgets.

Plans to develop Sudbury, where capacity is around 5,000, have been shelved. Wright said, "they would not have known how big to build the stadium".



Wright... sees the benefits

Full house set to give Celtic a noisy boost

THE most obvious indicator of Celtic's resurgence will surely prove also to be a valuable asset in the business of making progress in Europe tonight, writes Patrick Glavin.

FC Kosice of Slovakia will face a noisy full house of 47,600 at Parkhead as Tommy Burns's side attempt to improve on their scoreless draw in the first leg of the UEFA Cup qualifying round tie.

Results

Rugby Union
AFL Premiership: Edinburgh Acad 4, Saracens 40.
Celtic: Celtic 2, Dundee 23.
Premiership: Celtic 2, Dundee 23.

Baseball

AMERICAN LEAGUE: Cleveland 11, Detroit 3.
National League: Philadelphia 7, San Francisco 6.
Cleveland 11, Detroit 3.
Philadelphia 7, San Francisco 6.

Baseball

AMERICAN LEAGUE: Cleveland 11, Detroit 3.
National League: Philadelphia 7, San Francisco 6.
Cleveland 11, Detroit 3.
Philadelphia 7, San Francisco 6.

Rugby Union

Australians aim for Test in England

Robert Armstrong and Greg Grogdan

AUSTRALIA will decide tomorrow whether to revive the traditions of a Grand Slam tour by including an international against England in their end-of-season European itinerary.

The Australian executive John O'Neill said playing England was a logical step. "As we are playing three of the four Grand Slam countries, why not maximise the value of the tour by having a Test against England?"

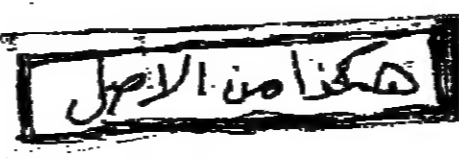
Ups and downs to go to play-offs

HOME and away play-offs are to decide the fate of England's leading clubs from this season onwards. English Professional Rugby Union Clubs Ltd is introducing the system to decide the final promotion and relegation places in Courage League One and Two.

Each other on a home and away basis to decide the final place in League One, the outcome being decided on an aggregate points basis over the two matches.

Pools Forecast

Table with multiple columns and rows listing sports events and forecasts. Includes sections for FA Cup, National League, and Scottish Premier Division.



The Oval Test. When England's cricketers arrange their wagons in a circle or make the valiant charge for glory



Paul Weaver

OVAL time, like Oval time, comes round in the gloom of a cricket season, and if only those football chaplains can keep their muddy studs off our nice white Stuart Surridge long sleeves

for another few days it should be quite a match. Last Friday, when the football season kicked off rather strangely with a match between Manchester City and Ipswich, the commentator said: "The weather today is warm enough for cricket." Well, it is mid-August.

The Oval Test, traditionally, is the final battle, the last hurrah, The Charge of the Light Brigade, The Alamo, Italy's Last Stand, Waterloo — about as far as you can get from the Northern Line and you're there. This is the time when England's cricketers, who regroup this afternoon, arrange a circle out of their wag-

ons or make a valiant charge for glory. "And at this stage I would like to welcome Radio Four listeners to Test Match Special, and the news from Boris's Drift. I'm afraid, it's not very good because England, having lost the toss, are in a bit of a howl-down against the Zulus and, as another valiant charge is made his legendary 104 against the 1992 Australians, where Hutton scored his 364 in 1938 and where England, famously, won the Ashes in 1956 and again in 1958.

This is where volunteers helped mop up the flood in 1968 so that Derek Underwood could mop up the Australians, and where more recently Devon Malcolm, who is now trying to get Nelson Mandela on to his benefit committee for next year, destroyed South Africa with nine for 87 two years ago. "You guys are history," he told them after being hit on the helmet while batting, but now he too seems to belong to cricket's dusty archives. So will Ray Iltingworth

after this one, having led England to another brave new dusk. Then it will be back to the Spanish sun and the Yorkshire town of Farsley, outside which he has never appeared truly comfortable. The entire world should be a sort of suburb of Farsley, it seems to think, and perhaps he's right. I know this is rather unflattering, but I rather like the old boy. I saw him on TV the other week and he appeared to have aged faster than a US President — as fast, even, as Dorian Gray, who in the last dying frame of the film pined on 90 years. Ily must be feeling as put upon as a darbood these days. Iltingworth has made mis-

takes, more than his supporters thought possible, but he still understands the game more deeply than any other cricketer person I've met. And if he has acted the Aytollah on occasions, well, that was his brief. He was not a self-appointed dictator; that's what the TCCB wanted him to be. It seems that Ily, once again, had a spleen-to-spleen talk with his fellow selectors before the side was announced on Sunday and he insisted that poor old Jack Russell should hand over the gauntlets to Alec Stewart.

At least Ily has chosen a finger-spinner, a breed that could replace the panda as the symbol of an endangered species. Robert Croft's professionalism must bring a moist gleam to the chairman's eye. Even here, however, Ily has appeared a little flawed. The majority of county pros place Peter Such of Essex ahead of all other off-spinners in the land, but the chairman appears to have a blind spot so far as Such is concerned. "Bloody carthorse," I heard him mutter at Old Trafford in 1994, when Such last played for England and made an outstanding effort to pull off a difficult catch. Such is not the all-round player that Croft is but Pat Pocock was surely right when he said: "Peter is a good mile ahead of everyone else at what he does."

Cricket

County Championship: Derbys v Notts

Freud turns up the heat

Paul Weaver at Derby

DEAN JONES, the Derbyshire captain, and Les Stillman, the coach, fly abroad this week for short holidays before the final push which could give the county their first championship for 60 years. Their chances are good. They are top of the table for the first time this season after taking only 50 minutes to complete their victory, by 303 runs, over a demoralised Nottinghamshire here yesterday.

championship will take care of itself. "We now have 10 days off and one or two of the lads are feeling a bit tired. But hopefully they will come back refreshed for the next game against Worcestershire at Chesterfield and for what could be the happiest 25 days of their lives. In Australia the top two teams play out the title, and you could do it here. "Devon (Malcolm) has bowled very well. We have given him respect and looked after him. He has set his own fields. He has a lot of pride and it takes courage to come back after what went on in South Africa. He is normally relaxed, in the groove and looking forward to his benefit season next year.

"Duffy, my vice-captain, has also done well. We call him Freud because he has got inside the other players' heads and gets them up with motivational speeches." Nottinghamshire, in contrast, look likely to be involved in hand-to-hand combat with Durham for the wooden spoon; this was their fifth defeat in a row. They resumed on 73 for four yesterday and lost their last five wickets in only 12.3 overs. Paul Pollard, struck on the helmet by Malcolm on Saturday, did not bat again.



Cruff craft... England's newest off-spinner on his way to two wickets at Edgbaston yesterday

Brown saves wobbly Warwickshire

DOGIE BROWN and Ashley Giles yesterday kept alive Warwickshire's hopes of retaining the County Championship title when they shared an unbroken stand of 23 in six tests over to secure a two-wicket victory over Glamorgan at Edgbaston.

The home side, needing only 136 for their sixth win of the season, subsided to 113 for eight before Brown

(28) and Giles (10) staged their rescue act. Brown hit the winning boundary off England's new spinner Robert Croft.

At Old Trafford, Robin Smith (77) and Will Kendall, with a career-best 75, earned Hampshire a draw against Lancashire. The visitors never threatened to reach their unlikely victory target of 415 but reached safety at 304 for six

Kent v Somerset

McCague puts Kent back in second place

David Foot at Canterbury

TWO devastating spells of grinding, grandiose fast bowling by Martin McCague, who took four for 21, ensured a 62-run victory for Kent with just over seven overs left yesterday. Even more heartening for the rap St Lawrence faithful was the fact that Kent were back in second position in the table. Just as Somerset appeared to be accelerating with impeccable timing, McCague was astutely, maybe desperately, brought back for the decisive phase. With his first delivery he had Parsons caught at mid-on. Turner disappeared leg-before to a yorker, Kerr and Rose had their stumps ripped out and the last five wickets had gone for 28. During this time Patel took his only wicket of the match, and a vastly important one it was as he dismissed Ecclestone after a trustful half-century.

for the whole of the fixture. The last day was always going to be a difficult matter of mathematics. Kent's stand-in captain Ward left Somerset to score 320 in 81 overs. It was a fair challenge and there were times in late afternoon when the balance seemed to be swaying away from Kent. Bowler stayed authoritatively for 75 balls before edging to backward short leg by way of the wicketkeeper's gloves, and Hadden was caught at silly point as he pushed forward to an off-break. But Lathwell brought increasing hope for the West Country as, head down in that unwaveringly diffident manner of his, he built his innings with cover boundaries off the back foot and some nice, wristy flicks off his legs. He had luck, too; he might have been taken early on at third slip off Headley, he edged Long over the shoulder of the wicketkeeper and he might have gone to silly point off Hopper.

Pace and spin a splitting headache for Essex

WAQAR YOUNIS and Saqlain Mushtaq yesterday bowled the Pakistanis to a fifth Telford Challenge victory of the tour, a crushing 271-run win over Essex at Chelmsford. The off-spinner Saqlain took five for 34 and match figures of nine for 81 while Waqar's pace produced four for 26 and an overall nine for 68.

strength Essex side also missing their captain Paul Prichard, who had a migraine. Darren Robinson shared a second-wicket stand of 55 with Jonathan Lewis and made his second half-century of the game, with eight boundaries, before knocking a simple return catch to Saqlain, the Man of the Match. The last eight wickets fell for 37 in 14 overs, however, as Essex were all out for 118.

Scoreboard

Table with 3 columns: County, Score, Overs. Includes sections for Kent v Somerset, Warwickshire v Glamorgan, and Telford Challenge.

Ice Hockey

Storm all set for Europe

JOHAN LAWLESS, coach of the Manchester Storm, said yesterday that he is confident of his team's ability to compete in the new European Hockey League.

Badminton

Bold omissions by Baddeley

STUVE BADDELEY, the former European and Commonwealth champion charged with resurrecting England's fortunes, has omitted Gillian Gowers and Anders Nielsen from his first two training squads announced yesterday.

Sport in brief

Table with 3 columns: Location, Date, Result. Lists various sports events and their outcomes.

Chess

Judit Polgar, determined to become the first woman player in the world's top 10, advanced her case at one of the strongest events of the year, the Bank of Austria tournament in Vienna, writes Leonard Barden.

Team talk

The independent news and reports service 0891 33 774

TheGuardian INTERACTIVE logo and contact information. Includes website URL and phone number.

SportsGuardian

MANAGERLESS ARSENAL COME UNSTUCK AT ANFIELD



Breaking out... Dennis Bergkamp leads an Arsenal counter-attack as he eludes Liverpool's Jason McAteer at Anfield last night

PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL STEELE

Premiership: Liverpool 2, Arsenal 0

McManaman makes merry

Michael Walker

LIVERPOOL followed their classy exhibition of possession football at Middlesbrough on Saturday with a contrasting performance of persistent effort at Anfield last night. It appeared to be bringing no reward until the tireless Steve McManaman scored twice in six second-half minutes to secure an ultimately comfortable victory.

After both teams' useful performance on Saturday neither line-up was changed. That meant Ian Wright was

again a spectator for Arsenal but Patrick Berger, out with a calf strain, did not appear on the Liverpool bench. Even without their new Czech Liverpool were flustered from the first whistle with three rousing attacks in the first five minutes. Seaman, warmly applauded by the Kop in recognition of his Euro 96 displays, easily saved the first two and the third, from Collymore, rocketed over his bar.

Liverpool had signalled their intention early and Seaman must have been relieved that Fowler, scorer of two hat-tricks against Arsenal on the Londoners' previous two visits here, was not behind any

of them. Stewart Houston was soon issuing vocal demands from the caretaker manager's dug-out. One of them may have been for Parfleur to get closer to Hartson and Bergkamp, and when he managed it Arsenal were a slightly more convincing force.

Hartson almost worked an opening with a neat piece of footwork and in the 25th minute Bergkamp delighted the visiting fans with a skilful juggle and shot. By then Arsenal had reached the base camp of their Anfield expedition by silencing the crowd. And despite conceding 10 corners in the first half, Arsenal went into the break on level

terms and Seaman had not been significantly stretched. Whether the Gunners had laid plans to attain anything higher was open to question. Their main aim seemed to be to stifle Barnes and McManaman and they were aided in achieving this by the Liverpool players themselves. Barnes was unrecognisable from the influential playmaker at Teesside. McManaman saw more of the ball than anyone else on the pitch, but found it hard to produce a telling final pass when faced with an 11-man defence. The overall effect was that Fowler was anonymous.

Robinson to winter with Tuigamala in rugby union

Paul Fitzpatrick

WIGAN's winger Jason Robinson looks likely to play League Two rugby union for Bedford or Blackheath this winter rather than rugby league for Great Britain in Papua New Guinea, Fiji and New Zealand.

The news came on the day that Robinson's Wigan team-mate Va'anga Tuigamala signed a four-month winter contract with Wasps, and less than a week after another Wigan player, Henry Paul, joined Bath on a similar basis.

The 22-year-old Robinson is one of the game's authentic stars and was an automatic selection for the Lions' tour which starts next month. He is good enough to win games on his own.

However, along with his team-mate Gary Connolly he has been refused permission to play by the Australian Rugby League, with which he takes up a contract next year and from which he has received a substantial "loyalty" payment. Connolly is signed up with the ARL from 1996.

The Rugby Football League may try to have the ARL's ban overturned in the courts. Failing that, Robinson, who underlined his ability less than two weeks ago when he scored five tries against Leeds — a joint record for Super League — seems certain to take up a winter contract in union.

Jack Robinson, the Wigan chairman, confirmed yesterday that his club had received approaches from Bedford, who are owned by the boxing promoter Frank Warren, and from Blackheath and he said that Wigan had no objection to the player signing a short-term contract.

"The agreement would be that they must take over his contract payments. The personal terms would then be between the club and the player," said the chairman.

Wigan likewise raised no objections to Paul and Tuigamala seeking winter employment elsewhere. "We are glad Inga has managed to fix himself up with a club," said Robinson. "Hopefully it will keep him in good trim for the start of the new rugby league season. We want him back for pre-season training in early January."

Rugby league was always prepared to accept that when union went professional there would be a free market place and the best bid should win. But the loss to Great Britain of two exceptional players in Robinson and Connolly, who

has been linked with Harlequins, is nothing to do with the startling cross-code developments of the past year. It is one crazy consequence of the long-running struggle for control of rugby league in Australia between Rupert Murdoch's News International, backer of Super League, and the ARL.

If Jason Robinson opts to join Bedford he will team up again with his former Wigan colleague Martin Offiah, who left Wigan recently to sign a dual contract with the London Broncos and Bedford.

The number of players switching to union full-time went up by three yesterday when Waterloo signed the out-of-contract Widnes players Tony Thornley, Jason Green and David Ruane. Nine Widnes players have now signed union contracts: Jim Mills, the chairman, blames the switch to summer play on an off season that is too long.

Queens Park Wasps, page 14



Winter workers... Robinson (above) can choose between Bedford and Blackheath. Tuigamala (below) has already opted for Wasps



Athletics international: Great Britain v Select Team

Christie drags out the soap opera

Duncan Mackay in Gateshead finds the British sprinter is not about to retire after all

TEN THOUSAND people were brought here apparently under false pretences last night to see what they believed would be Linford Christie's last appearance in a British vest.

But he gave everyone a rude shock when he declared that he might be back racing again next year. A retirement that was absolute only last week, when he said "all good things must come to an end", now no longer seems to apply and there appears every prospect of the 36-year-old former Olympic 100 metres champion carrying on to next August's world championships in Athens.

When he was asked by a British Athletic Federation official whether this match

against an International Select would be an emotional night, he answered: "Why? Who knows, you might even see me in a British vest next year. I might even go to the Europa Cup if they pick me."

Malcolm Arnold, the federation's chief coach, had apparently known about Christie's decision for two weeks, after the two had had a conversation during the Olympics and Christie had told him he was available for the Europa Cup in Munich.

coming out of the bend but twisted his left knee and had to concede first place to Regis by 0.02 in 20.62sec.

Christie then limped out to the centre of the track to make an award to the retiring team administrator John Brown, only to drop the memento, before withdrawing from a 100m showdown with Donovan Bailey, his successor as Olympic champion.

It was another bizarre twist in a soap opera that has dominated British athletics since June 1995 when Christie broke down and wept on television, declaring that the sport was no longer fun, he could not take the media pressure any more and would miss the Olympics.

As with his decision to go to Atlanta after all, Christie's determination to carry on will hardly have come as a shock to his team-mates. One has been busily collecting bets all summer that he would continue.

He knew Christie has never kept his word about retiring. In 1991, after finishing fourth in the world championships, Christie said: "It's better for me to go out at the top. I am not getting any younger and I'm disillusioned." In 1992, after his Olympic gold medal, he promised: "I'm retiring after 1994. It doesn't matter how well I'm running."

Bailey was pushed harder than he would have liked by Ian Mackie before winning comfortably in 10.19sec. The world record holder got the crowd on his side by warming up in a Newcastle United shirt.

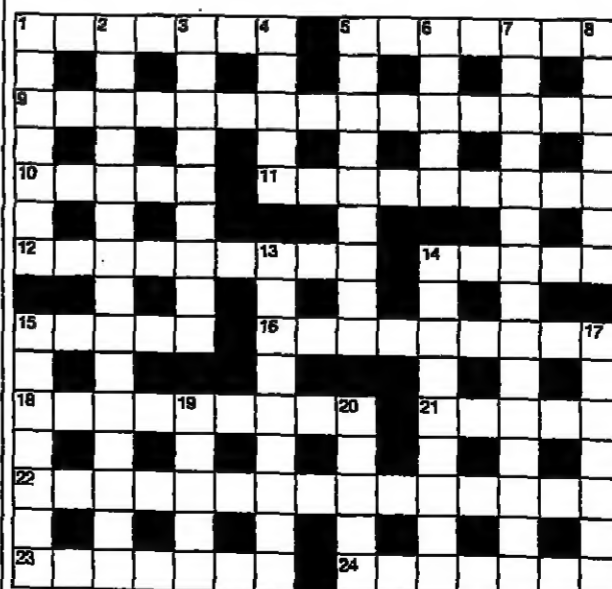
After the sight of a half-full Crystal Palace last week, it was heartening to see an almost capacity crowd, attracted here not only by Christie's alleged farewell but the promise of head-to-head competition involving a number of

Olympic champions. After the thrilling race between Christie and Regis, Roger Black brought the crowd to its feet again when he won his 400m duel with the United States relay gold medalists Derek Mills and Jason Rouser in 44.64sec. Black has returned admirably to his task of establishing himself as the best quarter-miler in the world after Michael Johnson.

There were other British victories on a night when the wind off the River Tyne was for once welcome. Paula Radcliffe, the new United Kingdom record holder for 5,000m, continued her impressive post-Olympic campaign when she won the 3,000m by 20 metres in 8m21.56sec. Nell Caddy, who trains on the dunes in Cornwall, showed a tactical maturity beyond his 21 years when he won the corresponding men's race in 8.03.58.

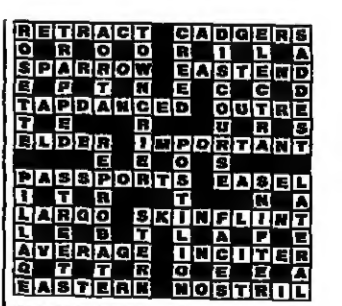
Guardian Crossword No 20,736

Set by Janus



Across
1 Spinning stick in underworld river (7)
5 Parloin a bit (7)
9 Mathematical genius who might do a spell at the Treasury (9,6)
10 Talks to the birds (5)
11 A cyclist needs it to deal with the law (9)
12 Combination of businessmen and loveless society? (9)
14 Change gear and put on first evening suit (5)
15 Receptacles for game (5)
16 Spoil the beauty of girl's shape (9)
18 They tell tales about railway staff (9)
21 Mount for a musketeer (5)

Down
22 Fast bowler's newspaper service? (7,8)
23 He wrote on the French river (7)
24 Was in awe of dead Red revolutionary (7)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,736

- 13 Turns to the subject of modern clothes (9)
- 14 Brutalise a Milesian perhaps (9)
- 15 Freeman the traitor? (7)
- 17 Tried an experiment on journalist (7)
- 19 Right woman to capture English bird (5)
- 20 Dispatch with drug (5)

Stuck? Then call our solutions line on 0891 335 233. Calls cost 30p per min, cheap rate, 49p per min at all other times. Service supplied by AT3

I awake with a pain in my kidneys. "Oh Christ, what is it this time?" says my wife, noticing the signs of wild panic. "Kidneys," I say. "It could be an early symptom of impending renal failure."
Matthew Norman's hypochondria

G2 page 13

